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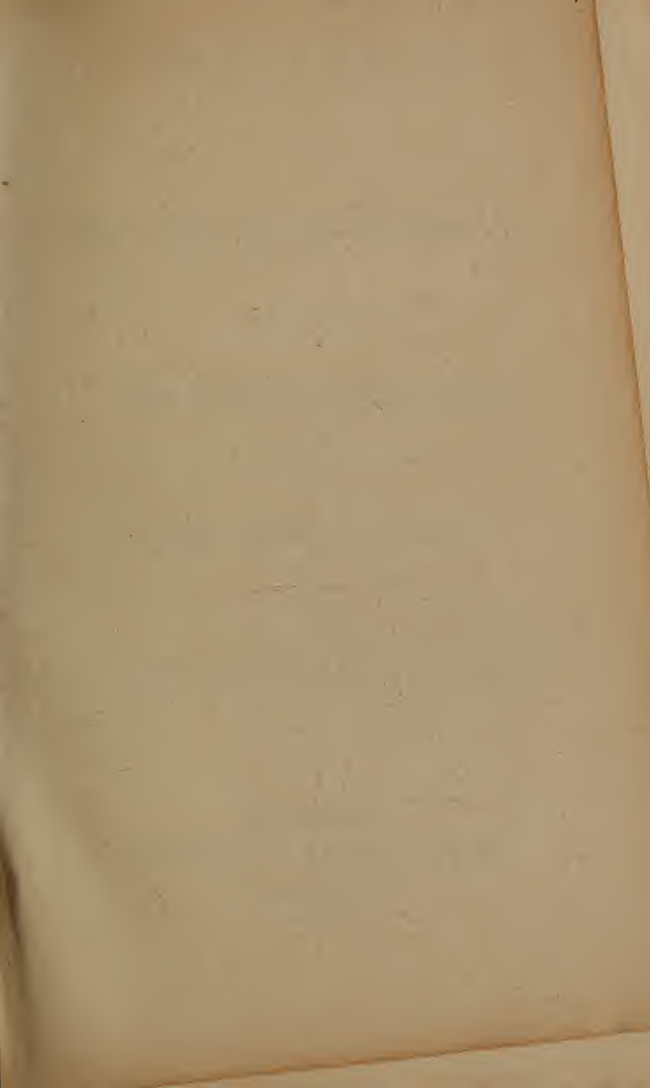
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THE SHEAF:

OR,

THE WORK OF GOD IN THE SOUL;

AS ILLUSTRATED IN

THE PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

OF

MRS. CORDELIA THOMAS.

"Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." JOHN 12: 24.



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THE writer of this little work, the wife of a much esteemed Methodist clergyman in the city of Buffalo, is known to the community in which she lives, as a lady of good education and talents, as well as of devoted piety. The interesting narrative of her experience, which is here given to the public, happily illustrates some of the principles and methods of practical holiness. Others, perhaps, have been the subjects of a similar experience, without having the opportunity and the literary qualifications, which would enable them to give expression to it. Situated as she is, she has felt that God had a work for her to do, which might not be equally expected of others; and she has endeavored with divine assistance to accomplish it. The reserve which is natural to woman, and especially to one who acknowledges all her gifts to be derived from God, would

have led her to suppress the knowledge of God's remarkable dealings with her soul, if her heavenly Father had allowed her, at the same time, to suppress her benevolent interest in the welfare of others. Her ardent desire for the welfare of others, whom she hopes her statements will benefit, has enabled her to set aside all considerations of personal reluctance and inconvenience. Many undoubtedly, who have been perplexed by peculiarities of inward experience, will be led to thank her for her labor and her sacrifice of personal feeling.

P R E F A C E .

THE writer of the present little work, having some years since arrived at that stage of religious experience not unfrequently denominated "the rest of faith," begs leave to present herself before the reader with her "Sheaf," the first fruits of that ripened harvest which her soul has realized in its spiritual Canaan.

She has given a brief narration of her wanderings and haltings, before her goings were established in the highway of holiness, in hope that, while it may prove a warning to the inquirer after truth not to follow her example, it may also afford a ray of comfort to such as find themselves treading in an uncertain path.

She has been especially prompted to take her pen, that she might bear testimony to those stages

of religious experience which follow that faith which establishes the soul in righteousness.

Believing that not a few have mistaken the beginnings of a life of faith for its maturity, and consequently have endured but for a season, she has wished to premonish the young pilgrim in the way of holiness, that the *fight of faith* is yet to come, and that, having girded on the armor, he is not to boast as he that puts it off. She has desired to speak a word of encouragement to such as are actually engaged in the heat of battle, by assuring them that there comes a period, not necessarily connected with the death of the body, when, with respect to wrestling with the carnal mind, or the life of self, it may be said the warfare is accomplished.

That He whose prerogative it is to guide into all truth may bless the perusal of this sketch of Christian experience to the good of the reader, is the prayer of

THE AUTHOR.

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THE SHEAF.

CHAPTER I.

First impressions of truth. — Convicted of sin at the age of six years. — Encouraged to pray for pardon. — Evidence of forgiveness. — The path of duty clearly indicated by the Spirit. — Failures in obedience. — Lack of religious instruction, and want of Christian sympathy. — No apology for backsliding. — Necessary aid always given. — The spiritual life the same in the child as in the adult. — Primary lessons of the Christian. — The present demand of the church and the world.

AMONG my earliest recollections, I cannot refer to any period when I was not, to some extent, under the influence of religious truth. Early taught that "Man's chief end is to glorify God, and enjoy him forever," I regarded my Creator as a being of infinite perfections, hating sin and loving holiness; rewarding obedience with eternal life, and disobedience with eternal death.

When about six years of age, the law of

God, early impressed on my heart, served as a school-master to bring me to Christ. Having deviated from the truth, I was made conscious that I was a sinner, and felt the wrath of God abiding on me. Though alone, the distress and anguish of my heart gave utterance to such cries as alarmed my friends, and led them, as they hastily entered the room where I was, to inquire the cause of my agitation. With wringing hands, which betokened the despair of my soul, I exclaimed, "I have told a lie! I have told a lie!" With a soothing voice, my mother said, "Can you not pray to God for pardon? Pray to him and he will forgive you, for he has given his Son to die for sinners." I replied, "I do not know how to pray." "Do you not know the Lord's prayer?" said she. "Not the whole of it," was the answer; but anxious to make use of every possible means to escape from the wrath of God, I desired to repeat it after my eldest sister.

My father, having been sent for, came and engaged in prayer. I was sitting on the lap of an aunt. My father was making supplica-

tion to God on my behalf, when the tumult of my soul was hushed, and there was a great calm. I was as conscious of pardon as I had been of guilt. The name of Jesus was music to me in that hour, for until prayer was proposed I had not indulged a thought of forgiveness. For a time my peace and my love were constant. Happy would it have been for me, if from that hour I had been obedient to the light bestowed.

The downward tendencies of my nature choked the seed sown in my heart. A plain path was shown me, in which I might have walked, but the narrowness of the way made me afraid. The Spirit would have been a sure guide, had I obeyed him. When convicted that I had done wrong, he indicated to me that I ought at once to confess it to my friends, and ask them to pray for me. Here I faltered. The sins, of which I felt guilty, were not known to any one but myself. I thought it surpassing strange that after God had forgiven me once, I had dared to sin again. I thought that my friends would wonder at me if I confessed that I had again sinned, as they never intimated

that I was in any danger in this respect. Held back from obedience through fear and shame, I soon lost my heavenly peace. What a loss was that to me! How often, in my childhood, when the remembrance of my lost happiness haunted me in the silence of the night, have I indulged the vain wish that I had died in infancy, or just at that moment when God forgave me my sins! What years of sadness and regret were the years of my life's morning! How sunny they might have been, had I but consented to learn the lesson of obedience! The buoyancy and frolicsomeness which characterize the child were little experienced by me. I was like a poor, lone, stray lamb, without a shepherd to call after me.

The friends who were acquainted with my religious experience, and were fully satisfied that it was the work of the Lord, seemed to feel no responsibility with reference to my case. Some of them regarded my conversion as an evidence that my stay on earth was short. While they were expecting that death would release me from

the ills of life, a spiritual blight came over my soul.

I have not a reproachful word for those to whom I then looked for help, but found none. They would gladly have afforded the needed instruction, had they been competent to the task. Much as I once regretted that in my early experience there had been no one to act toward me the part of a spiritual adviser, I am now perfectly satisfied that Infinite Wisdom, knowing the exact place for which he designed me in his building, gave me at that time all the inward light and outward helps which were then necessary for the development of the Christian character.

The spiritual life is the same in the child as in the person of mature years. In view of this fact, I cannot but admire that wisdom which made thus early outward circumstances so advantageous to my learning these primary lessons of the Christian disciple, — *entire dependence upon God, confidence in him, and obedience to him.*

When I reflect that the present state of the church and the world demands experi-

enced and valiant soldiers, who will, if need be, go out alone, and stand up at God's command and do his bidding, my early lack of counsellors, upon whom I could lean for spiritual instruction, ceases to be a mystery.

CHAPTER II.

Resolved to return to the Lord. — Attended camp-meeting.

— Sought pardon. — Evidence of acceptance not satisfactory.

— Sought justification by the deeds of the law. — Convinced of the necessity of inward holiness. — Increasingly sensible of inward bondage. — Earnest desires for deliverance. —

Went to R——. — Obtained the blessing through faith.

I LIVED a stranger to happiness until eleven years of age, when, becoming alarmed at my stupidity and hardness of heart, I resolved to return to the Lord.

As there was to be a camp-meeting in the town of G——, in this state, and as my father and the older members of the family were designing to attend it, I thought that if I could obtain permission, I would go there, and there seek God.

A solemn awe pervaded my heart, as I entered upon the encampment. It being the first day of the meeting, but few persons were on the ground. I was attracted to a certain spot, near the preacher's stand, by the sound of vocal music. I approached,

and heard two female voices singing the following words:

“Happy children we shall be,
Happy in eternity.”

This seemed the chorus of their song, and served, by way of contrast, to deepen my sorrow. Early the next morning, I was invited by a friend to present myself at the altar of prayer as a seeker. After a little hesitancy, I complied, and commenced crying for mercy. I was exhorted to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. I knew, indeed, that there was no other name through which I could be saved; but how to exercise faith was a mysterious question. Instantly reverting to the time of previous pardon, I was unable in that instance to recall the act of faith. At that early period I had not learned to doubt. My mother had no sooner said, “Pray to God and he will forgive you,” than I obeyed, and found pardon. But during the years of my disobedience unbelief had taken deep root in my heart.

I did endeavor to give myself to Christ, but had not a satisfactory evidence of accept-

ance. My effort to exercise faith was an effort to believe that I was accepted, rather than an effort to cease from self and rely on the atonement. The eye of my mind was thus diverted from looking to God as my only hope. I was conscious that I had not that sweet peace which I once had, when I rejoiced in a sense of pardon, but hoped that in the performance of Christian duties I should find spiritual comfort.

I examined myself as to the evidences of my being a Christian. Among the evidences which I thought I discovered were these: — a determination to forsake sin and lead a new life; doing every known duty; a love for God's people, preferring their society to that of others.

I ventured to make a profession of religion, realizing that it imposed upon me many obligations. These obligations I purposed to meet, but often failed. My religious history, for about five years, presents the picture of one under the law, acknowledging its outward claims, and seeking justification by outward services. I practised much self-denial, performed many duties, and bore

many crosses; but they were of an *outward* character. I knew not the deeply inward claims of the law. True faith, an inseparable element of the spiritual life, was wanting.

My condition was the more deplorable because I knew not my danger. During this time, I was often the subject of deep emotions. I experienced much satisfaction in the consciousness of having performed those duties which I considered incumbent upon me. I often went to the prayer-meeting so burdened with the conviction that it was my duty to take a part in the exercises of the meeting, by speaking or praying, that I felt borne down by a weight which seemed well-nigh intolerable. Though I sometimes failed to meet my convictions of duty in this respect, I oftener met them, and in doing so the tide of emotional feeling flowed in another direction, and I became the subject of pleasurable emotions, which more than balanced the pain of my previous burden. I experienced much satisfaction in religious meditations. I loved to converse with death. The scenes of the judgment were often present

to my imagination, as well as the delights of heaven and the miseries of hell. As a rational being, convinced that my soul's happiness and safety depended upon my giving myself to the service of the Lord, I was hearty and sincere in the attempt. I turned from the vanities and pleasures of the world without any regret. Indeed, I had never known much of what are generally considered its fascinations. I was, however, very early the subject of an ambition to become great, and to be ranked among the intellectually great and wise. For the accomplishment of my purpose I intended to make everything else subservient. Even piety itself seemed to possess additional charms, when I regarded it as desirable to make one wise.

I early made up my mind that I must be a Christian of no ordinary grade;—that generations yet unborn must be stimulated to deeds of noble daring, influenced by my example. This early ambition, deep-rooted, though unperceived, was as a canker-worm to my soul; but He, who has said that “except your righteousness shall exceed

the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven," was pleased by degrees to remove the scales from my eyes.

The reading of Mr. Wesley's Plain Account of Christian Perfection was made the instrument of convincing me of the necessity of Christian holiness. I resolved to seek it until I should find it. Ignorant of true faith, I sought this, as I had been accustomed to seek all spiritual good, by the performance of outward acts. My visits to my closet were more frequent. Many times in a day I retired for secret prayer; but when with my lips I cried, "O Lord, sanctify my soul," my heart said, "It cannot be done now, — I cannot believe now, — I must wait until after years of faithful discharge of duty, before I can presume to expect so great a blessing."

I realized in a manner never before experienced the contamination of sin, and the odiousness of it in God's sight. Beset on every hand, in my feeble endeavors to resist it, I realized the truth of these words of the poet: —

“The more I strove against its power,
I felt its weight and guilt the more.”

Pride and anger were sins which easily beset me. I was frequently overcome by them to an extent that occasioned great mortification and sorrow. While I had rested in the form of godliness, the enemy had seen little occasion for disturbing my repose; but as soon as God showed me what was in my heart, and I began to declare war against inward sin, I was like a house divided against itself. As I could not have victory without faith, in every contest I was overcome. I believed that there was help for me in Christ; and though the conflict seemed more and more severe, my determination to get the victory grew stronger and stronger. I was so bowed down under a sense of spiritual bondage, that often, in secret places, prostrating myself upon the floor, and not finding suitable words by which to utter my complaint, I endeavored, by deep groanings, to give vent to the sorrows of my heart.

After months of conflict, my heart was

gladdened by hearing that a number of persons in the city of Rochester had experienced the blessing of sanctification. I immediately formed the purpose of visiting that place, hoping there to see some one who could teach me how to find that inestimable pearl.

At the close of the year 1830, I was found among the worshippers at the old brick chapel, in the city of R——. Though twenty years since, I recollect well the subject of the sermon preached. It was an exposition of the dream of Nebuchadnezzar. I well remember with what thrilling delight I listened to the arguments of the speaker, as they were adduced to show the probability that we were on the eve of events that would introduce to our view that part of the vision represented by the mountain covering the whole earth.

Interested as I was in this to me favorite subject, there was one of far deeper and more absorbing interest, — that of personal holiness. My constant cry was, “Create in me a clean heart, O God!” I could not bear to think of entering upon the duties of a new year without being made free in

Christ. I deprecated that bondage into which sin had brought me, and groaned for deliverance.

Hope began to spring up in my soul. I apprehended Christ as perfectly able and willing to save me, and was in constant expectation of feeling in my heart that the work was accomplished. Still the blessing tarried. I entered upon the new year, and was still a seeker. The day following was the Sabbath. Throughout the day I was continually looking within, that I might discover the first signal that should betoken the accomplishment of the work.

On Sunday evening, such was the intensity of my desire that I resolved that I would not sleep, but spend the night in prayer. The recollection of Jacob's wrestling with the angel had prompted me to this resolution. I took the Bible, and, kneeling before God, read, again and again, "Ask and ye shall receive, seek and ye shall find, knock and it shall be opened unto you. If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them

that ask him." I felt that these promises were for me, and tried to avail myself of their benefit. I read, again and again, the following hymn :

"Come, O my God, the promise seal !

This mountain sin remove !

Now in my waiting soul reveal

The virtue of thy love.

"I want thy life, thy purity,

Thy righteousness brought in ;

I ask, desire, and trust in thee,

To be redeemed from sin.

"For this, as taught by thee, I pray,

And can no longer doubt ;

Remove from hence, to sin I say ;

Be cast this moment out.

"Anger and sloth, desire and pride,

This moment be subdued ;

Be cast into the crimson tide

Of my Redeemer's blood.

"Saviour, to thee my soul looks up ;

My present Saviour thou ;

In all the confidence of hope,

I claim the blessing now.

"'Tis done ; thou dost this moment save,

With full salvation bless ;

Redemption through thy blood I have,

And spotless love and peace."

How much did I desire a present realization of all that is expressed in this hymn! It was soon suggested that as Jacob wrestled all night with the angel, it would be presumption in me to think of being blessed before the break of day. "Surely you ought to be willing to wrestle all night, when good old Jacob did the same," said the tempter. When my willingness was to be tested, of course I must consent that the blessing should be deferred.

About five o'clock, ere the break of day, darkness came upon me. My shrinking flesh began to complain,

"And murmur to contend so long."

Almost discouraged, I retired to rest, but awoke, after a short sleep, with an unalterable determination to have the blessing, as I believed it was for me.

On that day, as I sat anxiously inquiring why the work of God was retarded, the following questions were proposed by the voice of the Spirit: Are you willing, for the sake of this inestimable pearl, to sell all that you have? Are you willing to meet

the obligations involved in the reception of such a blessing? Will you acknowledge it to the church and the world? Do you believe that God is able and willing now to sanctify you? Do you believe that now he does sanctify you?

To all but the last inquiry I could give an affirmative answer. Increasing light beamed upon me here. I said, "What does the Lord require of me this moment, but inward holiness? If he require this now, does he not require the faith requisite to this state now? If it be my *duty*, is it not my *privilege* to have this faith?" The truth at this moment flashed upon my mind. With a purpose as unalterable as that of the Medes and the Persians, I determined to go to my chamber, kneel before God, and *put* my trust in him before rising from my knees, though in the execution of my purpose it should cost me my life.

There was not, in this act, any purpose of bringing God to my terms. Exactly the reverse of this was the fact. It was bringing myself to his terms. With this vow upon me, I retired to the designated spot. My

adversary suggested that I had been presumptuous, if not impious, in making such a resolution, since I was so destitute of feeling. He suggested that, as I was in no struggle of soul, I was in no condition to receive the blessing; that the probability was that I should die or break my vow; that, at any rate, if I obtained the good I sought, it would cost me a desperate struggle.

Yielding to this last suggestion, as I was unwilling to break my vow or to die without the blessing, I commenced to struggle by crying aloud for mercy. My crying was so violent as to call to my help praying friends; but I soon perceived that it was not importunity *alone* which moves the Friend of sinners.

Turning my eye to Christ, stopping my ears to every suggestion but that of the Spirit, I gazed upon the Victim of the cross with an imploring look, saying, in the language of the poet,

“Other refuge I have none,
Hangs my helpless soul on thee.”

“My Saviour, I trust in thee *now*; I

believe that thou savest me *now*." So intent was I in committing myself into the hands of Christ as my Saviour, that I lost all concern for anything else. Satisfied that he that believes is saved, I asked for no other evidence than faith, being assured that "he that believeth hath the witness in himself." Conscious, through the illumination of the Spirit, that I believed, I was just as conscious that I was saved; faith being "the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." I was not filled with ecstatic delight, but with

"That solemn awe that dares not move,
And all the silent heaven of love."

Christ gave me rest in that hour. He took me out of the pit. A new song was put into my mouth. I declared to all around,

"This is the way I long have sought."

Returning home, I testified to the power of Jesus to save from all sin. The language of my heart was,

“Forever here my rest shall be,
Close to thy bleeding side ;
'Tis all my hope, and all my plea,
For me the Saviour died.”

No commandment was grievous, no duty was irksome. Christ's yoke was easy, and his burden light. Death and the grave were disarmed of their terrors.

CHAPTER III.

For nine years the position gained scarcely maintained. — Misapprehensions of the real stage of Christian experience attained. — Felt like a babe in Christ. — Want of spiritual advisers. — Perplexed with various questions. — An exact something required. — Christ a patient teacher.

It will perhaps be surprising to the reader to learn that for about nine years I scarcely maintained the position now gained; that, instead of advancing, I revolved continually in the same circle.

I had learned one lesson which I could not forget. I had learned how to put my trust in God, but not how to keep it there. Continually laying the foundation, there was no opportunity of building thereon. Among the hindrances which opposed my progress were these: —

In the first place, I misapprehended my spiritual state, by supposing that I had arrived at a state of maturity as a Christian, when, in fact, I was a mere *babe in Christ*.

Not that I supposed that I should cease to grow in grace. On the contrary, I expected a rapid growth. But the fact that the mass of professing Christians seemed quite content without even aiming at entire consecration, had a tendency to make me mistake my true position. I knew that they regarded those that professed that the blood of Christ had cleansed them from all sin as making great professions. I was jealous for the honor of God, and this was to me an absorbing question, — How shall I meet my responsibilities in such a way as to evince to others that God has wrought in me this great deliverance?

I felt, indeed, that I was like a babe that had just begun to recognize the mother; but the persuasion was, that, having reached this uncommon attainment, great things were required of me; that, as a matter of course, mighty works would show forth themselves in me.

I recollect that the first time in which I opened my mouth in prayer in the public prayer-meeting, after I had come to realize the dawnings of the life of faith, that

because, in yielding myself to obey the influences of the Spirit, I felt satisfied with saying but few words before the Lord, it was immediately suggested that no one would judge from my praying that I had experienced anything uncommon.

Like a pupil who, because he has been in school a long time, and has given attention to almost every branch of science, though he has never learned anything properly, yet thinks himself entitled to a place in advanced classes, and that he is even competent to teach others, so I commenced trying to learn the lessons and perform the duties of a mother in Israel.

I do not intend to say that I was seeking outward preferment, or that I was consciously endeavoring to make an exhibition of what I did not actually possess, but that, while the work of grace in my heart answered to seed just sown, I was expecting to realize the full corn in the ear. Not realizing that the true inward life as naturally manifests itself in a proper outward conduct as the good tree readily brings forth good fruit, I did not cease from my own

works, but endeavored to imitate what I considered were the legitimate works of the mature Christian.

It was my lot, in this stage of experience, as in the earlier periods of my life, to feel the want of spiritual advisers. Though I am confident that God knew what was best for me in this respect, I must say that if I had very many instructors, I had not many fathers. Believing that my instructors were fathers, I was not only hindered in my spiritual advancement, but brought into bondage by their traditions.

In my eagerness to know in what way or by what means my spiritual growth could be hastened, I often met this reply to my inquiries: "You must live by faith." This would have been a word in season, had there not been in connection with it that oft repeated adage, "We have all the religion we live for." In my haste to become spiritually rich, I received this adage as a golden rule.

The only question was, How much ought I to live for? What I desired and aimed at was to be just right every moment of my

life; but I often found myself perplexed with questions such as these: Though I know that my eye is continually to Christ, how can I be assured but that if with more *intensity* I looked to him I should receive greater blessings? Where should be the limit of my faith? Can I be right, and not believe all that God requires me to believe? I can trust Christ to cleanse me from all sin, but what more does he wait to do for me? If he wait to do more for me, and I must receive it by faith, then what should faith claim? Do not the Scriptures say that he is able to do abundantly for us, more than we are able to ask, or even think? How shall I avail myself of this abundance, and how shall I know that I receive according to the measure which he designs to give? There were times when my faith claimed, for the moment, all that God could bestow in that moment; yet I did not rest here. I was restless, hungering and thirsting; but "as if increase of appetite grew on what it fed, I was never satisfied."

In my perplexed condition, I often endeavored to increase the inward life by outward

activity. In my ignorance I was often laying plans and forming schemes by which I might better my condition. Accustomed to measure myself by others, and to compare myself with others, I especially coveted those gifts and graces which would render me useful to the church and the world; and while I looked for illustrious examples, I was inclined to mark out for myself a course of duty similar to that followed by such as have been eminent for piety.

Another question, which perplexed me much at this time, was, how to distinguish between the temptations of the devil and the risings of corrupt nature. While the works of the flesh had been made manifest to me, and my soul had come to an utter loathing of them, when my faith apprehended Christ as a perfect Saviour from all sin, it did in effect say to him, Take these, thine enemies, and slay them. How great was my surprise to find that after I had fully committed myself before the church and the world, as a witness that the blood of Christ cleanses from all sin, that I was still in possession of the same propensities

which I had before, and still felt myself in danger of being overcome by them.

I recollect very well that, one day, soon after my return from R——, while my hands were busily employed, and my heart intently engaged in looking to Jesus, a member of the family seemed much disposed to lead me into conversation, which appeared quite unnecessary, and especially disturbing to me, as I was disposed to meditation. I was surprised to know that there was discoverable, to myself at least, a feeling of impatience. I looked to Christ, and felt that I was saved. Indeed, I had no sense of condemnation, but I was ready to inquire, with much concern, What is that state of grace in which I stand? Do I bear witness to the truth when I say that the blood of Christ cleanses me from all sin? What have I gained by that work which God has wrought in me? Satan would gladly have persuaded me that I had gained nothing; but I could not consent to that. I was conscious that I had learned one lesson, — that I had learned to look to Christ and be saved; and whether tempta-

tion came from the world, the flesh, or the devil, I realized his power to save to that extent that I did not come into condemnation.

Had my faith at this time been perfect, I might, doubtless, have smiled with equal contempt at the rage of Satan, the frowns of the world, and the complainings of the flesh, considering them all as unable to harm while my soul relied on my all-sufficient Saviour. Had my faith been perfect, I should have been saved from all my haltings. I am constrained to confess that instead of the work of grace in my heart at this time answering to good seed sown on good ground, it better corresponded to that sown among thorns. If what is properly denominated worldly care did not choke the seed, that anxiety which must ever be present where perfect trust is wanting did prove a hindrance to the spiritual life. If the deceitfulness of worldly riches and the love of worldly gain did not become in me the root of all evil, my impatient haste immediately to become rich in spiritual bless-

ings, both in gifts and graces, baffled the design of the Sower of the seed.

The experienced Christian will readily perceive my true condition. With respect to outward duties, like a child trying to do the work of a man because he thinks he is a man. With regard to the inward life, like a child who can walk only in one direction, — to the outstretched arms of his mother. As the child can never perform the work of a man, so the babe in Christ can never perform the work of a mature Christian. He may imitate his works, but all such works are only wood, hay, and stubble, that cannot abide the fire.

As the experienced Christian will readily perceive, my varied misapprehensions were the result of ignorance in one direction. I did not rightly apprehend the offices of the Comforter, and, consequently, had not the inward anointing, — the unction from the Holy One, — causing me to know all things. With a true desire to please God, and make advancement in holiness, I was so fettered by ignorance and misconceived notions that the wonder is that the spiritual life did not

become extinct. The difficulty was not that I did not earnestly covet all the fulness of the Gospel, or that I counted any sacrifice too great for its attainment, but that I failed to realize the manner in which the spiritual life is produced and maintained in the heart. No one can apprehend this, except him who receives Christ into his heart as his life; and he who does this knows no other source of life, and he expects that the ratio of his progress will be according to the mighty workings of Him who is the way, the truth, and the life. He who, in consenting to the terms of discipleship, loses his life that he may find it again, realizes, from the first hour of spiritual infancy until he arrives in the unity of the faith, — unto the measure of the stature of a perfect man in Christ, — that he has all the grace which He who is his spiritual life can impart. With Paul, having received the Author and the Finisher of faith into his heart, he can say, "I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God."

There is an exact something which God

requires us to be, every moment of our lives. Says the Apostle John, He that saith I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But we may ask, can we do any more than to keep his commandments, or any less than to keep them, and still know the Lord in the sense of the Apostle? — He who has numbered the very hairs of our head has marked out the precise steps for us to take, *all* the way of our spiritual advancement. He does not give us a certain range, and say, In any part of this you may walk with my approval, but if you will take this part you will please me better than if you take that.

Here, with humble adoration, I would say, Thanks be to God that he has provided a remedy that meets every demand, — that he has laid help upon One that is mighty and able to save to the uttermost. Christ is a wise and patient teacher, as well as a compassionate Saviour. He never despairs of a pupil, though he be slow to learn, if he but consent to remain in his school. He knew how to give me some lessons, which I was obliged to receive. He sent outward trials,

which were indeed severe; but I humbly kissed the rod and him that appointed it, saying, "The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?"

CHAPTER IV.

Outward privations. — Difficulties of circumstances. — Acquaintance with Christian friends. — Searched the Scriptures to find the true doctrine of the offices of the Comforter. — Led to discover the cause of previous failures. — Received the kingdom in its beginnings. — Found perfect rest, the fruit of perfect faith.

As I found increasing cares arising from new relations, I felt, more and more, that God is the only source of comfort, and turned my eyes to him with increased intensity of desire and faith.

My daily experience seemed to say that I, who early came to Christ, seeking preferment in his kingdom, had not known what I had asked. Instead of doing great things in the vineyard of the Lord, I found that all the grace which I had seemed requisite to sustain me under my domestic cares and privations. And what were these? My time was so occupied with the labor of my hands that I did not find that leisure for

religious meditation, reading, and prayer, that I had been accustomed to enjoy. What could I do if, while my spiritual wants increased, I should be deprived of those privileges which I had been accustomed to regard as necessary helps to a growth in grace?

It was with pain that I realized that I, who for years had been hoping that God would send me to a foreign land, to proclaim to the heathen the unsearchable riches of Christ, was very poorly adapted to fill the humble station in which I found myself, as the wife of a Methodist travelling preacher. I felt that my former habits of life had almost totally disqualified me for my position. Naturally reserved, I had given myself so much to mental abstraction and religious meditation, that I had found little time and much less relish for society, except that of a few friends upon whom I lavished my affections. How could I become all things to all men for their good? Neither nature, education, or grace, had taught me this lesson.

Trying as was the reflection, the probability appeared to be that I should pass

away from this world without realizing my long-cherished hopes of extensive usefulness.

I was not insensible that my duties as a wife and a mother could not be regarded as small. I had no higher ambition, with regard to the little one whom God had given me, than that she should live to bless the church and the world; and I felt an earnest desire for wisdom, that I might, in her training, so meet my obligations that she might not fail to accomplish the high and exalted purposes for which she had been created.

But having from childhood loved to anticipate the millennial reign, and having ardently hoped that I might be made the instrument of contributing to the hastening of that long-looked-for event, I was pained to know that my sphere of usefulness was so limited; and still more was I pained to feel that in my limited sphere I was an almost cipher.

God, having placed me in a position where I felt my necessity, in his own time and way brought relief. During the second

year of our residence in P——, I became acquainted with some Christian friends, whose conversation was rendered a great blessing to me. I discovered in them, especially in Sister C—— (who, being dead, yet speaketh), a depth of piety to which I was a stranger. She having, by a public profession of Christianity, subscribed to the doctrine that “no mere man, since the fall, is able perfectly to keep the commandments of God, but daily doth break them in thought, word, and deed,” had come to know, from the teachings of the Spirit, that “love is the fulfilling of the law,” — that she could be just before her Judge, since her Judge was her Advocate.

I loved to catch the words which fell from her lips. Though spoken with great calmness and gentleness, they fell with great power on my heart. She seemed to know the things whereof she affirmed; and though, in some instances, I failed to understand her, such a mere dwarf was I in spiritual things, I could not but remember the words which she spoke. They were as nails driven in a sure place.

As I was eager to know the truth, so I was willing to receive it. I could not but remark with what confidence she spoke of the offices of the Spirit, declaring him to be the only teacher and guide, — the interpreter of the Scriptures, and the only medium through which spiritual things can be discerned.

With a renewed spirit of inquiry, I unfolded the sacred pages of the Bible, and was surprised to learn that though I had been familiar with their language, I had failed to discover how expressly they point to the Comforter as the only hope of the church. I was led to the discovery of the great error of my religious life. I was forced to confess that what little I had known for a certainty of religious truth, I had known only by the teachings of the Spirit, — that the little way in which God had led me in the divine life had been pointed out to me by the guidance of the Spirit.

I saw that I had been enveloped, as it were, by a cloudy mist, from which had proceeded many voices professedly declaring

truth, but they had not given a certain sound, inasmuch as I had not been able to rely upon their infallibility. I heard a voice proclaiming, with no uncertainty, "This is my beloved Son; hear ye him."

How could I hear him, if I rejected the Spirit whom the Father hath sent in his name? How could I know the Father, if I knew not the Son? and how could I know the Son, if the Spirit did not take of the things of Christ and show them to me?

I was led to see that my faith had been imperfect, inasmuch as it had claimed the merit of the death of Christ, without expecting the sure guidance of the Comforter. My meagerness, leanness, and barrenness, ceased to be a wonder. How could I avail myself of the gifts which he had received for me, so long as, blinded by ignorance and human wisdom, I had failed to perceive the only medium through which they could be communicated? I saw that I had failed to discover the entirely spiritual nature of the kingdom of God; that though I had been accustomed to acknowledge, in the rain and in the sunshine, in the calm and

in the storm, the munificent hand of a Heavenly Father, I had failed to perceive that, with equal acquiescence, it was my privilege to say,

“So I may thy Spirit know,
Let him as he listeth blow ;
Let the manner be unknown,
So I may with thee be one.”

I had not learned to commit to God, with the same confidence, both the workings of the inward kingdom and the affairs of outward providences.

As I hailed with joy this beaming light upon my soul, and received Christ, as the author and finisher of faith, into my heart, I found every spiritual necessity met. I found perfect rest to my soul, by becoming clay in the hands of the potter.

The language of my heart was, Thou, O Christ, art my Shepherd; I shall not want anything, even of spiritual good. Thou art my living Bread, of which I eat and live; my Smitten Rock, whence issue springs in the desert of my soul, from which all my thirst is assuaged; my Prophet, made of

God unto me wisdom, — what thou teachest, that I know; my King, thou writest thy laws upon my heart, and causest me to walk in thy statutes, to keep thy judgments, and do them. My Christ, my Prophet, Priest, and King; my threefold Head, I have thee and endless life. Lead me as thou pleasest, and where thou pleasest I will go. Teach me as thou wilt, and what thou wilt I will listen and obey. Henceforth I call no man father, for one is my Father, even God; — no man master, for one is my Master, even Christ.

These, the beginnings of the kingdom in my heart, came not with outward observation. Deep in the retirement of my soul I received these hidden truths, as the sure precursor of a brighter day. I gave no public testimony to the work wrought; and even in the limited circle of friends where I was known, I failed to make manifest these incipient stages of the setting up of the kingdom.

I was not, at this time, the subject of any marked inward manifestations or outward developments. I had ceased to look for

signs, contented to live by the faith of the Son of God. I was perfectly satisfied with what God, as a wise master-builder, was doing in the temple of my heart, not presuming even to inquire of the progress of the work, believing that he who had begun a good work in me was able to complete it, and that he would, in his own way and time, accomplish it.

CHAPTER V.

The Christian like a traveller. — Sometimes knows his precise position from having arrived at a given point. — Inclined to look upon past experience. — Wondered at the abundant yet unavailing toilings. — Retrospect of the ground already occupied. — Detained at the threshold of the kingdom of heaven, from not apprehending its nature. — God can bless the haltings of some to the good of others. — Precise boundaries to different stages of experience not easily described.

As the traveller in an unfrequented road often pursues his path with scarcely any knowledge of his precise position, except that he may know that he is following in that track which will lead him to his place of destiny; and as it is his privilege, from time to time, to arrive at marked points, where he may know exactly where he is, and retrospect the way in which he is travelled, so it is with the Christian pilgrim.

He who with full purpose of heart sets his face towards Zion is a traveller in an unknown path. He may have heard much

of the way, — he may readily perceive his own starting point, and the direction which he is to take. As he pursues his journey, and finds that the road answers the description which has been given him, he takes courage. But there are times when he cannot exactly define his position. He may know that he has not deviated from the path, and that he is following his guide; but he cannot always tell whereabouts on the path he is, or how much further he is to proceed before coming to a given point.

There are times when he knows that he has reached a given point, — that he has passed through a marked stage of Christian experience. It is his privilege, from his newly gained position, to retrospect the past; and while he remembers the consciousness that he has had that God was leading him in a way of which he was ignorant, it is his happiness to know that by a review he comes to a better knowledge of the way in which he has been led.

I had come, at this time, to a period in my religious history when I was much inclined to look back upon past experience,

and pass judgment upon it. I did not wish to esteem lightly anything that was worthy of being considered valuable, and I am not conscious that I did; but as I discovered my previous errors and misconceptions, I was led to exclaim, "How have I toiled all night, and caught nothing! How slow have I been to perceive the true path!" In the abundance which my soul realized, as I had come to apprehend Christ in all his offices, made known to me through the teachings of the indwelling Spirit, how I wondered that, for so many years, I had been abundant in toilings, without hearing the Master say, "Cast the net on the right side of the ship, and ye shall find."

Before proceeding further, it may not be unprofitable to the reader to take a retrospect of the ground already occupied.

My early conviction of sin was deep and pungent. Though evidently the work of the Spirit, inasmuch as no human instrumentality was apparent, it was, doubtless, the fruit of the seed of truth which was early sown in my heart. Though convicted and condemned for a single sin, in the par-

don of that sin I found great joy and peace. I did not know, at that early age, that what I had experienced was what others called *experiencing religion*, a term familiar to me as a household word. I soon learned, from what I heard my friends say of me, that they regarded me as having been converted. I used often to query with myself how it could be that I was converted, when I did not know that the Lord had forgiven me only *one sin*. I used to wonder that I did not feel distressed for other sins which I had committed, and often wished that I knew as certainly that *all* my sins were forgiven as I did that *one* was. I did not dare to tell any one my feelings upon this subject; but as I turned my thoughts to Christ, and realized how kind he had been in pardoning one sin, I was wont to feel that he was not angry with me for anything that I had ever done.

In view of the fact that the natural man cannot discern the things of the Spirit, it is not strange, perhaps, that after years of wandering from a plain path, in my attempt to return I lost my way, or, rather, stopped

short of the righteousness of faith. Though the darkness which had come upon me, in consequence of disobedience, was not at once dispelled, I was so desirous of being a real Christian that there was much of the time in which I sought justification by the works of the law, that I could say that I lived in all good conscience.

Cradled in the lap of Methodism, — my father's house being the home for the itinerant, as well as the place for his preaching, — it is not strange that, as the seeds of ambition sprang up in my young heart, they should show themselves in desires to be great in the kingdom of heaven. Could I read the writings of Wesley and Fletcher, and not feel stimulated to deeds of noble daring? Could I, living in this age of the world, be satisfied with imitating a less worthy model than Mrs. Fletcher or Mrs. Rogers? Might I not hope that by possessing superior advantages I might become myself a more illustrious example of piety?

Had there been discovered to me the true genius of the Gospel, I doubt not that then I should have consented to have learned a

lesson of humility from the Master, instead of experiencing a feeling similar to that which the disciples evinced as they disputed among themselves who should be the greatest. But the same compassionate Saviour who bore with them, and taught them such lessons as they could bear, did not reject me because I, like them, failed to apprehend the true nature of his kingdom.

Realizing, as now I do, that without faith it is impossible to please God, and that they that are in the flesh cannot bring forth spiritual fruit, I must adore that Goodness which early taught my heart to fear. I realize now the truth of the words of that eminent poet, whose hymns for children made a deep impression upon my mind, in childhood. He says, rightly :

“ 'T will save us from a thousand snares,
To mind religion young ;
It will increase with growing years,
And make our virtue strong.”

After becoming convinced of the inward claims of the law, I failed, as the reader has already seen, to apprehend my privilege. I

do not know but that I can say that I followed the light that was given me. In my testimony, which I felt called to give, I could say nothing less than that the blood of Christ cleanses from all sin. Had I realized, as I do now, that all unbelief is sin, — had I looked upon Christ as made of God unto me wisdom as well as righteousness, — I doubt not I should have ceased from my own wisdom, and from that class of works which must take the place of those that naturally follow the faith that apprehends him in all his completeness. I looked upon Christ in his priestly vestments, and believed that he had made a full atonement for all my sins. Standing in this truth, I felt no condemnation for inward defilement or outward transgression; but I failed to walk in entire newness of life, because I could not see, with equal eye, Christ my Prophet, Priest, and King. My heart cried after wisdom. I searched the scriptures on my knees before God, in secret places. I read the lives of the eminently pious. My inquiry was, “Who will show me the exact standard of Christian attainment?” Stand-

ing, as it were, on the threshold of the kingdom, and demanding my right to possess it in all its glory, I was detained there from hidden causes.

Perhaps it may, with no impropriety, be said, that while I was in this stage of experience, I was like the husbandman who rejoices in finding precious seed, though he is ignorant of the manner in which it is to be reproduced. It is very natural to suppose that, in such a case, much time would be lost in experimenting. My understanding had become so far illuminated, that I clearly apprehended that Christ was an all-sufficient Saviour. I had so far availed myself of the provisions of the Gospel as to rejoice in their abundance, though ignorant, to a great extent, of the manner in which they are to be made available. When the truth was fully perceived, I was not disobedient to its dictates.

I have given a somewhat detailed account of my wanderings and haltings, before coming to apprehend the spiritual nature of the kingdom of Christ, not without hope that the inquirer after truth might be benefited by

its perusal. Cannot God, in the abundance of his grace, cause that even my haltings, by being made warnings to others, shall be among the things that shall work for his glory, while his patience and long-suffering, as exercised toward me, shall encourage the dullest scholar in the school of Christ?

Who shall prescribe for him a way? Cannot he do what he will with his own? What if they who labor but an hour receive a penny? Shall they who have borne the burden and heat of the day complain against the Master of the vineyard? Will he not say, "Have not I done as I agreed?"

It may be difficult, for such as are accustomed to define the precise meaning of the terms "justification" and "sanctification," and to describe the limits of that work of the Spirit which the soul undergoes, as the signification of these terms becomes apparent by actual experience, to fix data in *my* case, — to say when, according to their views, I was justified, or sanctified. I do not feel called upon to throw any light upon the matter in this particular. Much as my mind had been perplexed with questions

which very naturally arise upon this subject, it ceased its carefulness when it committed things, known and unknown, into the hands of the potter, without a doubt but that he would do his pleasure.

CHAPTER VI.

The eye of faith turned within, to watch the workings of the Spirit. — Believed that he would work his wonders in his own way. — Read in the Scriptures the wonders wrought by the Spirit. — Saw that human wisdom must forever lie buried in the dust. — The Christian cheerfully descends, in order to exalt Christ. — The ultimate result which the soul must realize that becomes clay in the hands of an indwelling God. — The process through which it arrives at this result. — Saw as through a glass darkly what was to be ultimately realized.

HAVING come, through a clearer apprehension of the offices of the Spirit, to a more perfect realization of Christ as the way, the truth, and the life, my eye of faith was turned within, to watch, with ceaseless care, the workings of the inward Comforter. My faith beheld in him a God able, and willing, and ready, to do all his pleasure. What wonders he could or would accomplish, I did not dare to ask. One wonder he had already wrought, in bringing me to consent that he should do *his own work in*

his own way. I had not only consented, but I readily believed that he would do for me this very thing. Here I rested, nor did I seek with curious eye to see the manner of his working, or watch with painful care to know what he was about to accomplish.

I read in the Scriptures that mighty wonders had been accomplished through the Spirit, — that through him men had spoken wonderful words, — words by which others had been saved; that through him miracles had been wrought, by the apostles, both in the bodies and the souls of men. I learned from the Scriptures that the Spirit was to take of the things of Christ, and show them to the disciples; that he was to guide them into all truth, and show them things to come; that, favored as they had been with Christ's personal ministry, — witnesses, as they were, of his death and resurrection, — they must needs tarry in Jerusalem until they were endued with power from on high. I learned from the Scriptures that, as the Holy Spirit fell on the disciples on the day of Pentecost, they were prepared to fulfil their great commission, and spoke with

tongues, while many heard, believed, and wondered. I read these words from the mouth of a risen Saviour: "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." I read, and pondered, and especially did I hide in my heart these sayings: "He shall guide you into all truth," — "He shall take of the things of mine, and show them unto you." I perceived that he was fully competent to make known in my heart the mystery of godliness, to that extent that I should be availed of all the gifts and graces which the Gospel proposes to bring to man.

I had not arrived at this point of religious experience, and yielded myself to obey the voice of the Spirit, without being made acquainted with his claims. I saw that, both in the inward manifestation and the outward development of God's work in my heart, my human wisdom, which had been accustomed to forecast, — to look at appearances, to avoid seeming inconsistencies, and to anticipate probable consequences, — must forever lie buried in the dust; that no possible exigencies, or unforeseen emergencies,

could for a moment demand it back from that grave into which it had fallen, as my faith apprehended Christ as made of God unto me *wisdom*; that, like a child in love, I must be like a child in obedience, — obeying with or without a reason; that, as the child may perform an important service for the parent, by simply running to another, and repeating the words given him by the parent, though he may have little knowledge of the intent or design of his mission, so I, as an instrument in the hands of the Spirit, might be competent to the rendering of a similar obedience. When I learned this, I felt that it was a wholesome doctrine, and full of comfort.

The Christian, as he desires to make known to others the object of his love, that they may see and love him too, cheerfully descends, he cares not how far, if it be but to prepare a place for the foundation of that cross which shall exhibit to view a crucified Saviour. Such is his love that he cares not if, in doing this, he be preparing the foundation for that cross upon which he himself shall be crucified. He says, "It is enough

for the servant that he be as his Master;" and though it may not yet appear to him what he shall be, he has heard that "Every one that is perfect shall be as his Master."

He readily perceives that, in his dealings with men, God desires to make known and exalt himself, while the creature, humbled before him, confesses his majesty. Recognizing God as unchangeable in his attributes and requirements, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me," is the first law written on the inner temple of his heart. Though, having come unto Zion, he has long since ceased to hear the thunderings of Sinai, he feels that Jehovah spake not with greater emphasis to ancient Israel, saying, "I the Lord your God am a jealous God; my glory will I not give to another," than Christ speaks now to his church, saying, "He that humbleth himself shall be exalted, and he that exalteth himself shall be abased."

As I desire to bear testimony to the efficiency of the Spirit to guide into all truth, and as I feel especially called to testify to the result which the soul must

eventually realize which becomes clay in the hands of an indwelling God, as well as the process through which it arrives at this result, it may not be improper to state, in a few words, what this result is, as well as the process by which it is obtained.

This result cannot better be expressed than in the words of Christ, "That they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me and I in thee, that they may be one in us." This complete union with the divine nature is the result of a full restoration to the divine image. Faith and obedience are as natural to the soul thus restored as unbelief and disobedience are to the carnal mind. This work, accomplished by the agency of the Spirit, is wrought in the soul by a baptism into the *death of Christ, followed by a resurrection in his likeness.*

I had, previously to that period of religious experience of which I am about to speak, received into my heart the promised seed, with full confidence that the Gospel should do for me all that God designed that it should. Though I realized, from a present experience, that faith, even as a grain of

mustard-seed, removes mountains of unbelief, I had but a faint conception of the glory of that consummation which was in the future, while it had not entered into my heart to conceive of the painfulness of that complete crucifixion to everything but God's will, which necessarily precedes it. With the apostle, I had counted all things loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus; but I had not as yet suffered the loss of all things, nor had I but a limited view of the extent of the meaning conveyed in the term "*all things.*"

It seemed good to my indwelling Teacher to give me to see as through a glass darkly what he designed me to realize, ultimately, with open vision. As a skilful chemist, who knows by what analysis to bring about a given result, it seemed good to him, by the very manner in which he showed me things to come, to lay the foundation of that cross upon which I was to be crucified.

CHAPTER VII.

The manner in which God's work was made openly manifest, as, also, the way in which were shadowed forth both the suffering and the glory yet to be realized.

HOPING for the candor and the patience of the reader, — that he will judge nothing before the time, — and especially that there may come upon his soul a benediction not less than that which is couched in the emphatic word of the Revelator, — “Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are therein written, for the time is at hand,” — I proceed to narrate the manner by which God's work in my heart was openly made manifest, as also the way in which were shadowed forth both the suffering and the glory yet to be realized.

The reader will remember that I had given no public testimony concerning my new apprehensions of truth. I had, indeed, written to a dear brother, then in Connecti-

cut, that I was trusting in God to do for me all his pleasure, in his own time and way; but as the inward development discovered to myself little else than that "faith" which "is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen," the outward manifestation to the little circle of friends in which, by the providence of God, I was placed, declared little more than that I had ceased from my own works.

Indeed, to the eyes of those who had seen little else of the inner kingdom than that which is made manifest by the outer glory, Ichabod appeared already written on the doors of my tabernacle.

In the fall of 1842, having spent the summer under the paternal roof, I returned to my own dear home, in the quiet village of Avon, a place endeared by the associations of loved ones, bearing about me a double charge, in the inner work of the Spirit and the outward manifestations of Providence. The peaceful infant which I bore in my arms might have been called a fit emblem of the work in my heart. Her name, signifying "bitter," I might have thought appli-

cable to the new inward creation, could I have foreseen its poignant workings in its future development; but, as yet, all quiet without, and within a stranger to inward or outward forebodings, I sat quietly at the feet of Jesus, waiting to catch the gracious words which might fall from his lips.

The reader will recollect that at this time the subject of the personal advent of Jesus Christ, as at hand, was much agitated. Many were running to and fro, sounding, as they believed and professed, the midnight cry.

I cannot say that I felt no interest in a subject so grave and important in itself, and especially involving such tremendous consequences; but I had little confidence that the propagators of the doctrine of the personal advent of Christ as nigh knew, to a certainty, anything more about it than did their opponents.

I did not feel competent to weigh the opposing arguments of disagreeing doctors, while my inmost soul instinctively shrunk away from the exhibition of that human wisdom which taxed its utmost capabilities

in its feeble attempts, in this respect, by searching to find out God.

My convictions were, that those persons who, notwithstanding all the reproach and ignominy which they suffered, evidently thought they were doing God's service, by crying, "Behold, He cometh," had certainly as strong claims to their pretensions of sincerity and piety as had their opponents. I regarded them, as in other respects, like the mass of professing Christians, receiving and holding much of precious truth, but in a manner from which they derived little benefit. While I saw that, to the mass of professing Christians, truth comes by the hearing of the outward ear, and is approved and made manifest by human wisdom, I could not but judge Adventists with the same equanimity that I judged every other religious sect.

The fact that I wish especially to get before the reader is this: Having come to a point in my religious experience from which I was accustomed to look back upon my path, and pass judgment upon my former state, I almost unavoidably looked to

see where others were, and passed judgment upon them. I did not come to this survey with a desire to spy out the nakedness of the land, but with a true desire to know, as far as I might, the true position of such as avowedly maintain the doctrines of the Methodist Episcopal Church. It may not be thought strange that one who had so early subscribed to her doctrines, — whose ambition had been, not only to become acquainted with her doctrines, but to observe her discipline, — should come, at length, to a reconsideration. What I particularly desired to know was what her standard writers taught with regard to the teachings of the Spirit.

While I could not fail to see that it was with her an established doctrine that the work of grace in the heart is accomplished by the Spirit, and that this work extends to the entire sanctification of the soul, I was pained to know, that, both in her ministry and membership, there were but few that were able to testify that the blood of Christ cleanses from all sin, while there were

fewer still that appeared to have full confidence in the teachings of the Spirit.

One reason why new inquiries arose in my mind, upon this subject, was this: I had been led to commit myself to the teachings of the Spirit, and the question very naturally arose, when my obedience shall be tested; — is it probable that I shall be called to act a part which my brethren will not approve?

I was not hesitating as to the expediency of obedience, for I had learned to call no man father; but I seemed to have a presentiment that there might come a time when, in the estimation of others, I should exceed just bounds. I was not anticipating any wonderful manifestations or high-wrought bodily exercises, but I was expecting that in God's own time he would freely make known to me the things of Christ; — and when I could not but see, that, notwithstanding all the truth which men may hear and read, there are few that are actually saved with the power of a present salvation, I was ready to inquire, who will receive my testimony? “What is that to thee? follow thou me,” was the reply.

Will the reader pardon my seeming digression, as I resume the thread of my narrative?

Believing that no one could know of the certain approach of the coming of the Bridegroom, much less be called to cry, Behold, he cometh, unless he were inwardly taught and commissioned by the Spirit, I felt quite at ease, knowing that to live is Christ; or to die, or meet Christ in the sense in which Adventists expected him, would be gain.

The doctrine of the universal spiritual reign of Christ had, from childhood, been a favorite doctrine; but not having received any light upon the subject, since, conscious of my utter ignorance, I had come to look upon the Spirit as the interpreter of the Scriptures, and the only teacher of spiritual things, through whatever channel communicated, I could have no opinion with regard to it.

I remarked to one of the propagators of the contrary doctrine, that, with his view of the subject, I could not divest myself of the impression that Satan would obtain a great triumph. He alluded to the fact of

thousands having died in infancy, from whose mouths God had ordained praise, and desired me to read the arguments which might be adduced to prove that the year 1843 would be the year of the personal advent of Jesus Christ.

With an unprejudiced mind, I set myself to the task of investigation, being willing to lay upon the altar what still would have been a pleasing doctrine, could I have known that it was truth. I had not any curious desire to know things unrevealed. Whether time was to be long or short, was not the absorbing question, but whether the Gospel would do for me all that God designed it should. My faith gave an affirmative answer to the latter question.

I had not fully examined the amount of proof which Adventists then made use of, when, one evening, while reading a small tract, containing their arguments to prove that the Sabbath of the world was at hand, I felt, from an inward testimony of the Spirit, that it was even so.

Calm and peaceful, I retired to rest, slept sweetly; yet awoke, once or twice, just

enough to have a joyous consciousness of the coming of the Bridegroom.

I had, at this time, no intention of proclaiming his coming; but believing myself in readiness for the event, I was quietly waiting for any indication of the will of the Master.

He who comes to an apprehension of the offices of the Spirit, and lays hold on God's covenant at that altar to which they have no right who serve tabernacles, learns when to be still, and when to run; when to be silent, and when to speak. If it be his lot "to stand, and wait, and hear no call," still obedient,

"He will not go without his Father's word."

The day after receiving these inward convictions, I became conscious of an inward testimony, and soon found that I must echo with my tongue what the Spirit repeated in my heart.

I commenced writing to my friends, exhorting them to be in readiness for the coming of the Lord.

While engaged in writing, my husband,

who had been absent, returned, and seemed quite surprised that I had become so positive, after so hasty an examination of such a subject, and begged me to read the arguments on the opposite side of the question. I replied that I believed their arguments to be valid, but I was not assured by them, but by the Spirit of God; that, this being the case, I had no time to pursue their arguments, or to examine opposite ones.

Joyfully yielding to the influences of the Spirit, that came upon me like a rushing mighty wind, I fulfilled my mission to others, by saying, as the Spirit gave me utterance, "Behold, the Bridegroom cometh," — "Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight." They who watched my movements, and were convinced that I was obeying a powerful impulse, failed to discover the *exceeding urgency* of the King's commandment, as realized by me.

My heart even now beats with gratitude toward those who, in this time of extraordinary manifestation of the Spirit, showed me all possible kindness. Though I could not

submit to their judgment, I knew that it was with feelings of special interest for what they regarded as my good, that they suggested that fears were always to be entertained with respect to those who thought themselves to be the subjects of special illuminations; that they almost invariably proved themselves to be fanatics; that in that way many had lost a fair reputation for Christian character, and brought great ignominy upon the church; and that it was our duty to look upon a subject in its broadest light, and determine our course of conduct in view of probable consequences.

Plausible as these suggestions were to them, I did not recognize them as words fitly spoken. I asked myself how I could take care of my Christian reputation, but by obeying the voice of the Spirit in my heart. I could not forget that he who thought it not robbery to be equal with God had, for my sake, made himself of no reputation; and I sought no greater honor than to be, in this respect, like my Master.

Knowing that man's wisdom is foolish-

ness with God, and believing that God's foolishness is wiser than man's wisdom, I told my friends that I had nothing to do with consequences, any more than Jonah had, when he was called to go to Nineveh, and say, "Forty days, and Nineveh shall perish;" and assured them that God was perfectly able to vindicate himself in all his ways, and that, however the event might prove, he could take care of his own glory in my case, as well as in the case of Jonah.

In this dispensation of the Spirit, which was more glorious than any that I had previously known, I realized what it is to talk with God, as friend with friend. Though I felt that, with reference to some, I had a special commission, there were many things that the Spirit whispered in my heart, which he plainly indicated that I was not to utter. Indeed, notwithstanding the things which he made me to know, he said, with much emphasis, "I have many things to say to you, but ye cannot bear them now."

During the brief period that I was the subject of special spiritual manifestations, I

experienced great peace, and joy, and triumph. Though I rejoiced in the anticipation of a future glory, my joy was great on account of the voice of the Bridegroom in my heart. I thought that God was bringing forth the top-stone of the spiritual temple, with shoutings of grace. My tongue was loosened, to declare, with great boldness, the truth as it is in Jesus.

Though words better selected could not have been chosen, by which to express the ultimate result which that soul must realize that, by the utter rejection of self, receives into his heart the Promised Seed, I failed, at this time, to apprehend the import of the message of the Spirit. I knew that the Shepherd called me.

“ He drew me, and I followed on,
Charmed to confess the voice divine.”

I had taken him for my *wisdom* ; and, for wise reasons, he set before me a lesson, the full import of which I was not competent to understand. My ignorance led me to conclude that the Spirit, in testifying in my heart of the coming of the Bridegroom, bore

witness to an outward coming, such as Adventists were expecting, when it was testifying, beforehand, of the full establishment of the spiritual kingdom within me. The attending circumstances were of such a character as to make it easy for such a mistake to be made.

The beginning of the shadowing forth of this future glory was realized while I was reading of the world's Sabbath as just at hand. As Philip found the eunuch reading, and began at the same scripture and preached to him Jesus, so the Holy Spirit, who is never wanting in means by which to make known and illustrate truth, saw fit, as he found my mind directed to the examination of that view of the Christian's final Sabbath as maintained by Adventists, to make me realize, by infallible signs, the dawning of an endless rest in Christ. What a suitable occasion was this!

I am not unconscious, while I feel called upon to testify concerning the things that have been freely given me of God, that I give, also, a clear exhibition of the dulness of the natural heart. It will readily be

admitted that many who listened to the words which fell from the lips of Him who spake as never man spake, did not apprehend his meaning, though he declared to them, — “The words which I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.” Even the prophets, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto us, searched diligently, in order that they might understand the import of that which the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify. It was not given them to know those hidden truths, except by revelation. How often did Christ have occasion to explain his meaning to his disciples! “Are ye also without understanding?” was an appropriate question when addressed even to them. Says Paul, “When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things.”

Reader, wouldst thou know the perfection of that charity so beautifully described by the apostle? — wouldst thou have that love in thee wherewith the Father hath loved the Son? Then thou must become

one with Christ, as he is one with the Father. See that thou refuse not him that speaketh within thee, because, at first, thou art not fully competent to understand. Blessed are thine eyes, though, as yet, they see as through a glass darkly. If thou wouldst ever come to the substance, despise not the shadow. Wouldst thou hear Him who hath loved thee, and given himself for thee, say "Thou art all fair, my love." "There is no spot in thee." Indulge in no impatient haste. Ere thou canst arrive at this consummation of thy hopes, he may have many things to say to thee, which now thou canst not bear.

I am aware that, to some, it may appear quite paradoxical, how any one can be the subject of marked spiritual illuminations, and be called to bear a message from God, without understanding the nature of that message.

I might say it was my uniform testimony that the Spirit in me bore witness to the coming of the Lord; and that, while Adventists were endeavoring to prove from the Scriptures that the end was nigh, I cried,

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me. Though the accuser of the brethren has not failed to hurl his fiery darts at me, while he has endeavored to magnify the *greatness of my mistake*, my kind Shepherd has never given me even a reproachful look, because that I, as a little child, performed my errand without understanding its precise nature and design. Sweeter than the mother's hush of peace ever fell on the ear of infant, a gentle voice has said, Fear not, neither be dismayed; I am thy God, that leadeth thee in a way thou knowest not, *making darkness light, and crooked things straight.*

I am aware, also, that, to some, it may appear strange, if not absurd, that I should be called to give, with all possible confidence, a testimony to a stage of experience which was to be realized in the future.

The great Husbandman, who has said of his word, "*It shall not return to me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it,*" if he choose to raise up a witness for the truth, may, with equal propriety, cause a testimony to be given concerning a

past, present, or a future good. If he cause it to be proclaimed that a harvest is near, it amounts to a certainty that at least the seed has been sown. If, on the other hand, it be announced that seed has fallen on *good ground*, even in an honest heart, it is equally certain that there shall appear, first the blade, then the ear, and ultimately the full corn in the ear. As an illustration and proof of the above remarks, I may add, that of the two persons who had, at this time, a better apprehension of the nature of my testimony than I had myself, one of them seemed especially qualified to explain the future glory, and rejoiced, on my behalf, in view of coming good; while the other was equally joyful in the assurances which he had, from the things that I affirmed, that I had come to know the truth.

Others, with equal sincerity, may see little propriety in my warning others to prepare for the reception of a good which was to be realized by myself. There might be some plausibility in the view of such, if it could be made to appear that the state of grace which I then saw in the future is not

one to the attainment of which all are called. However much we may be accustomed to regard ourselves as isolated beings, God regards us as children of one family, upon each one of which he waits to bestow the equal favors of his grace. Does he seemingly separate one from the rest, and bestow upon him marked favors, he has equally in view the good of the whole as of the one.

There were, at that time, two persons, whose example of faith and patience had been blessed to me, that understood the nature of my testimony. One of these (sister Cogswell, before mentioned) visited me, before I was led to suspect my mistake. I felt, with her, all the freedom of a child with a mother. She was one who had long watched for the rising of Zion; or, in other words, had long waited for the indications of the coming of Christ, in power and glory, to establish his spiritual reign in the hearts of men.

Previous to her visit, she had received a letter from me, in which I had told her all

that was in my heart. When she came to see me, at Avon, she said, "When I received your letter, I was reminded of these lines, from Dr. Watts,

‘ Though seed be buried long in dust,
It shan’t deceive our hope ;
The precious grain shall ne’er be lost,
For grace insures the crop.’ ”

She told me that a spiritual coming, in my own soul, could only answer to the spiritual crying of which I was the subject; and without evincing any uneasiness on account of my ignorance, said, God is able to separate the chaff from the wheat.

So great was my present joy, and so abundant were my spiritual manifestations, that it was difficult for me to conceive of any future glory that could exceed what I then realized.

Though the Spirit did not cease to bear witness in me, that that marked spiritual dispensation under which I then was (in many respects like that of John’s) was to decrease, and give place to another, I thought that the glory which I saw in the

future must be realized in another mode of being.

My gracious indwelling Guide, whose prerogative it is "to show us things to come," did not cause me to see, as in a glass, that harvest which must result from good seed sown upon good ground, without, in the most striking manner, giving me to realize the process by which the result is obtained.

That process by which the soul is brought into a state of perfect union with God is well expressed in these words of Christ: "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground, and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." I beg leave here to say, that the doctrine of the entire crucifixion of self, *after* the soul has attained to that state of grace in which it becomes clay in the hands of the potter, with a faith that claims that he shall do all his pleasure, was not taught me by man; neither received I it from man, but from the Holy Ghost.

Before that dispensation of the Spirit (under which I cried, "Behold, He cometh") had passed away, I was the subject

of two marked exercises, by which were shown me what it is to know Christ in the fellowship of his sufferings and the power of his resurrection. Until the time that this painful stage of religious experience was shown me, I had fulfilled my mission with the greatest joy. One Sunday, just as I left a class-room, where I had enjoyed great liberty in giving testimony, these words of Paul were spoken with great emphasis in my heart: "Lest I should be exalted above measure, through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan, to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure."

As I thought of the possibility of falling into pride, I said, I trust in thee, O God, for the thorn in the flesh, if it be necessary; and I cheerfully welcome it as the greatest good which thou canst bestow. Soon after this, the word of the Lord in me began to assume a character which might well be termed the *burden* of the Lord. At the family altar, in the evening, I had a most marked realization of this truth: that we know not what

to pray for as we ought; but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us, with groanings which cannot be uttered. Ignorant of my position, so far as different stages of Christian experience are known, without knowing why, I prayed for deliverance. My tongue was but the mere instrument of the indwelling Spirit, for I had no apprehensions of that painful exercise of soul which I was soon to realize.

As the usual hour for sleep arrived, I did not feel at liberty to retire; but, my mind being drawn to engage in writing, I took my pen, when I found that, instead of my words being given with readiness, I must *wait* to know the mind of the Spirit. As I waited, a few words were given me, after a deep groaning of spirit. These words I wrote down, then waited to receive more. More were given, after increasing pain. In this way I continued to write, feeling that my pen was but the instrument of the indwelling Spirit; and though a part of a sentence was given at a time, when the letter was concluded, there was no want of connection in the parts. But this was not the

distinguishing mark of this exercise. It was characterized by a deep pain of soul, in which it seemed that my body could not sympathize. No groanings of the body could help to give vent to this inward pain. My body seemed as the motionless chamber of the soul. My soul seemed like a glass vessel filled with heated air. There seemed to be scarcely any vent; or, rather, the vent seemed to bear this relation to the pressure of the inward heat, that it barely suffered sufficient to escape to keep the vessel from bursting. Deep in my soul (for *words* were nothing here) I cried, "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt."

Another characteristic of this exercise was my utter helplessness. I could not hasten or retard these waves of unutterable grief that rolled over me. I felt that, with reference to receiving aid or sympathy from any human source, I was left alone, and there was none to help me. As I became conscious of coldness in the outward frame, as the inward heat ceased its intenseness, it did occur to me that I might experience

relief, in that respect, if a friend were nigh to keep a fire for me.

Soon after this, that Heaven-appointed angel, Sleep, led me to quiet repose. "I laid me down, and slept. I awaked, for the Lord sustained me."

The following day, as, with increased vigor of mind and body, I was giving my attention to home duties, and pondering in my heart what could be the meaning of the painful exercises of the previous night, a gentle voice whispered, "*The fellowship of His sufferings.*" How my heart melted as I realized that my Saviour had given me to taste of one drop of his sad cup! I counted it an honor to which I had not aspired.

I had, at this time, but a slight conception of the lessons of instruction that I have since drawn from reverting to that night of agony. Though I saw in the peculiar marks of this exercise the distinguishing features which characterized the sufferings of the Man of Sorrows, I failed to perceive that the full picture here presented was ultimately to be realized in myself. During the time of this exercise, I thought that I

was experiencing the thorn in the flesh, which I had welcomed to my heart.

The other marked exercise referred to was the opposite of the one just described. It was one by which was shadowed forth the *glory* of the soul fully restored to the Divine Image. This exercise was given on a funeral occasion. I not only had faith in my indwelling God, as a God able to raise the dead, but I had a most sensible realization of the omnipotence of the Spirit. My own spirit was clothed with this energy to a degree that well-nigh astonished me. I not only felt this energy pervading my whole being, but was conscious that that divine power in me was able to raise the dead.

This exercise, though it made a deep impression upon my mind, was less understood than the former. It was, to some extent, like a picture, the original of which had not been seen, though so fully impressed upon my mind that the original could not be discovered without a clear perception of the resemblance between the two.

CHAPTER VII.

Called to leave first principles. — Days of spiritual desolation and sore conflict. — New test of obedience. — Suggestions of Satan. — Suffered no unnecessary pain. — Little variation of experience. — A gradual change. — Led to consider previous exercises. — Became inured to trial. — Increase of the spiritual life. — Indications of the nature and progress of the work. — Marked assurances of the fulfilment of a precious promise.

THE time having arrived when, in my religious experience, I must needs leave the first principles of the doctrines of the Gospel, and go on unto perfection, forgetting the things that were behind, I pressed forward toward the mark, for the prize of my high calling.

I soon perceived myself in an unknown path. To the eye of sense, the race set before me was a steep declivity, in descending which I could make no haste. I had seen enough of the glory of the spiritual kingdom to be assured of the omnipotence of the Gospel. I had had such views of the

might of the Spirit, that I could not fail to expect great things. I did not, Jonah-like, sit down and watch to see what would become of the world, but I was looking to God, and listening to hear what he would say to me.

I became more and more conscious that the glory was departing from me, with reference to inward manifestations. That God in this respect should leave me, without assigning a reason, and at a time, too, when I had thought that he was bringing forth the *top-stone* in my heart, was indeed a sore trial; but my stricken heart could only say, Thou doest all things well.

Previous to these days of spiritual desolation, when I was given up to the buffetings of Satan, as was Jesus in the wilderness, my mind was led to contemplate much upon the trial of Abraham, when he was called to offer up Isaac, the child of promise. It seemed to me that the Lord designed to teach me some special lesson, by referring me so often to this instance of trial. I was particularly impressed with one view of the subject, — to wit, the laying of Isaac

upon the altar by the hands of the Father. This question often arose in my mind: Did not God, by this requisition, design to make known to Abraham something of what it cost him to lay upon the altar the promised Seed of the woman, the Lamb slain from before the foundation of the world?

It appears to me, when the soul arrives at that point where it is called to lay even holiness itself upon the altar,—or, in other words, when ceasing to be taken up with its holiness, it rejoices exclusively in the *God* of holiness,—that it is made to know something of the yearnings of the heart of Infinite Love, as he gave his only begotten Son to die. I believe that the soul, having passed this point, has already experienced a baptism into the name, or the nature, of the Father, distinct, though not separate, from that of the Son.

As my obedience had been tested, in respect to obeying the impulses of the Spirit, when he bade me cry, “Behold, the Bridegroom cometh,” I came now to a severer test. I am not prepared to say that, previous to this time, my faith or

obedience had been severely tried. So long as the Lord gave me a mouth and wisdom which all my adversaries could not gainsay or resist, there had been but little room for trial. But while I was saying, "It is good for me to be here," I was called to descend from what had been to me as the mount of transfiguration, into the valley of humiliation, where it was my lot not merely "to stand and wait, and hear no call," but to descend lower, and yet lower still.

I had, when I yielded myself to be clay in the hands of the potter, consented to cease from my own works. My spiritual Refiner knew well how to prepare the furnace that should try me in this respect. The mistake that I had made, in not apprehending the nature of that coming to which I had borne witness, while it gave the keenest point to that thorn in the flesh which has pierced my soul in every part, was made to subserve an excellent purpose, since it not only compelled me to bear my cross, but furnished the nails which fastened me to it.

The remembrance which I had of my

former state, when I talked with God as friend with friend, and when he opened my mouth to declare the truth with all boldness, had a tendency to make me feel more desolate.

The friends who previously had not understood me were poorly qualified to speak a word in season to me now. They feared for me, because they did not discover in me that outward activity which had marked my course in former years. It was evident that they judged my apparent want of zeal for God as the result of my misconceived notions of following the Spirit. Instances were not wanting when, could I have been permitted to have expressed the language of my heart, I could have said, "Miserable comforters are ye all." Though I did not hesitate to maintain my integrity, in my mouth were no reproofs for my accusers.

Satan, in this time of trial, did not fail to act the part of an accuser. He often suggested that I reaped but little fruit from my faith, and derived less power from the presence of the indwelling Spirit, since he in-

spired but that simple prayer, "*Thy will be done.*" Whether he came as an angel of light, a roaring lion, or a subtle serpent, he showed this one design, to induce me to take my cause out of the hands of Him to whom I had committed it. He would often quote scripture, endeavoring to make it appear that, for the sake of the cause of God, and that my good might not be evil spoken of, and especially that none of Christ's little ones should be offended in me, I ought to command upon myself more *visible influences* of the Spirit.

Though I felt keenly the force of his suggestions, and could not bid him flee, I could answer him successfully, by saying, if I am ignorant, Christ is wise. He is abundantly able to take care of his own cause; and as for my Christian reputation, I have none separate from him.

The great question with my accuser was, "*What are you doing?*" Having received Christ as an infant Saviour, born in the manger of my heart, what could *I do* but worship him? In her utter poverty, my soul had no gifts to offer him. What could

she do but wrap herself in the mantle of her own nothingness, and humbly prostrate herself in silent adoration?

I am fully satisfied that my heavenly Father did not suffer me to have one unnecessary pain.

He designed that I, like my gracious Captain, should be made perfect through sufferings; and that I might be perfectly crucified to my own ambition, reputation, and friends, he did not permit me to come down from the cross, to work a miracle, to prove the sincerity or genuineness of my faith; but he threw a hedge about me, which I could not overleap.

For about three years, my religious state scarcely varied. It will, perhaps, be surprising to some to know that my religious testimony was far from one of complaint. I continually testified to the sufficiency of salvation, as they with whom my lot has been cast can bear me witness. My testimony was like that of the apostle: "The life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God." I understood the import of the words "always sorrowful,

yet always rejoicing;" and while I felt no liberty in testifying to the sorrow, I could speak of the joy.

My conduct, to some, perhaps, appeared not less mysterious than that of David, when he learned that his child was dead. Conscious that I could not vindicate myself in the eyes of others, "I behaved and quieted myself as a child that is weaned of its mother." The language of my heart was, Why should I weep? Though I seem shorn of spiritual strength, and am made to realize that without Christ I can do nothing, why should I complain?

It was not until I became so crucified to former religious joys and manifestations, that the remembrance of them began to fade from my memory, and I felt that it was a matter of indifference whether or not God appeared to vindicate my cause, that I began to realize some new development of the spiritual life.

The manifestation was, at first, faint, as the glimmering ray which betokens the dawning of day. This passage of scripture was much in my mind: "Behold, thy

King cometh unto thee, meek and lowly, sitting upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass." Though with the gentlest accents, these words were so continually whispered in my heart, that I was ready to say, Can it be that God has been fulfilling his promise, and I perceived it not? Is it in the abiding presence of this meek and lowly one that I am now, and have been, realizing the coming of the Bridegroom? Has Millerism (a term which associated with itself both ignorance and fanaticism) been but the animal upon which he has been making his entry into the spiritual Jerusalem?

I was not in haste to pass judgment upon myself. I felt an unbounded satisfaction in knowing that He into whose hands I had committed all things knew full well the way in which he was leading me, as, also, the goal which I should ultimately reach. If he were preparing me to receive him in all the pomp and majesty of the King of glory, my heart could say, "Hosanna to the Son of David. Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord;" but

if I was destined still to feel the fires of the furnace, I could respond, Amen. Good is the will of the Lord. Led, as one blind, in a way I knew not, I dared not ask to have my exact position explained to me.

In the gradual change in my experience, I realized more liberty in testifying to the power and sufficiency of the Gospel, and its attainableness through faith, though I became more and more sensible that God was carrying on a hidden work in my heart, to which I could not bear testimony.

As it pleased God, at length, to indicate to me, from time to time, something of the nature of that work which he was accomplishing in me, I was often carried back to those marked exercises described in the preceding pages. That exercise by which I had been shown what it is to know Christ in the fellowship of his sufferings, was especially brought with great vividness to my mind. This had been to me, from the time in which it was given, as a book of reference. It was, at first, a sealed book. I did not understand its deep design, but I believed that there could not have been

given a surer evidence that what was written under those painful circumstances was the truth of God than was received at that time. I hesitate not to say, that my spiritual Moses has completed his work in me, according to the pattern there shown me; and while I say this, I desire to bear testimony to the truth of these words of Christ: "Ye shall indeed drink of the cup which I drink, and with the baptism that I am baptized with withal, shall ye be baptized."

Assured as I am that no one can ever come, in the unity of the faith, to the measure of the stature of a perfect man in Christ, unless, in this respect, he follow him, I hope that the patience of the reader will not be exhausted, if I shall, by a detail of my own experience, endeavor to impress upon his mind, that "as many as are baptized into Christ are baptized into his death."

Though conscious that I had known what it is to taste a drop of the sad cup of Christ, I was slow to perceive what it is spiritually to eat his flesh and drink his

blood. I failed to discover how perfectly, from the period in which he was made manifest in the flesh until his ascension, he was the representation of the soul that is begotten of God.

As the veil began to be taken away, my mind, as I have said, was turned to the contemplation of past exercises which had been inexplicable. As I found in my own experience that conflict succeeded conflict in rapid succession, and that I had no power to hasten or hinder the intenseness of the flames that surrounded me, I remembered that so it was in the pattern which had been shown me. I turned from the picture to the Original: I beheld a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief. As I was led, by successive crucifixions, in a way I knew not, I often felt encouraged when I remembered that, in the pattern which had been shown me, though a part was shown at a time, the several parts, when taken together, made a perfect whole. I looked to Christ, my great example; and I saw that, from the time of his miraculous conception until his glorification, he had perfectly fulfilled his

mission. I believed that as he had done, so I should do, — that as he had kept his Father's commandments and abode in his love, so I should keep his commandments and abide in his love. Having a full expectation that the Gospel would perfectly accomplish its design in me, I believed that my obedience would be like his, a perfect obedience, or, in other words, that the work in my heart, corresponding to good seed sown on good ground, would ultimately result in a harvest in kind and degree such as would best please the Sower.

As I came gradually to discover that the work of crucifixion was being carried on, I felt like saying, How am I straitened until it be accomplished! I not only remembered that the scriptures affirm that if we suffer with him we shall reign with him, but I knew that, after the sufferings of Christ had been shown me, the glory which was to follow was also made manifest. As I had all along, so now I realized, *that I must abide my time.*

Perhaps my patience was in no respect more severely tried than in this. After I

had come to feel that it was of no consequence, so far as myself was concerned, whether or not God should appear to vindicate my cause, my silence with regard to my not being able to make a full declaration of the truth that had been revealed in me, was especially painful on another account. One feature of the new development of the spiritual life was *the going out of my soul after others*. Though not audibly expressed, from the depths of my heart was continually breathed this aspiration, — O, that the salvation of Israel were come out of Zion!

While I saw that the mass of professing Christians were bound down under a spiritual bondage, more oppressive than that experienced by ancient Israel in Egypt, I would gladly have been the instrument of their delivery. Though perfectly acquiescent, it was, nevertheless, a painful fact, that my hour was not yet come for giving that testimony to the power of the Gospel which I held myself in readiness to give when the Spirit should open my mouth.

I had become so inured to pain that I could glory in my infirmities. At the commencement of this inward crucifixion, when my helpless, bleeding soul could only say, "Not my will, but thine be done," I failed to realize that it was only repeating the language of the Lamb slain on the altar of my heart. When my soul apprehended her crucified Lord, she exclaimed, as did Thomas on recognizing a risen Saviour, "My Lord and my God." I became so much in love with him, that it was the joy of my heart to follow him wherever he should lead me.

But, as the inward life increased, it became burdensome (if I may so speak) from its own fulness.

Nearly three years since, it pleased God to give me further indications of the nature and progress of his work in my heart. It was my privilege to spend a short time at a camp-meeting, where were assembled a goodly number with whom I had frequent intercourse. Knowing that many of these were inquiring after the way of holiness, I could not but hope that at that place they

might be brought to the rest of faith. While my heart was drawn out after these, a gentle influence pervaded my whole spiritual being. As a mother returning, after a long absence, with a gift to her child, says, "I have something for you," so gentle and refreshing seemed this spiritual manifestation. I felt that I already had in possession all the grace which God had seen best to bestow, yet I believed that there were many gifts which my ascended Lord had received, which, if he saw best, he could enrich me with.

I knew that he could, if he saw that it would be for his glory, so carry me through the furnace of affliction, that even the smell of fire should not be on my garments. I knew that he could loosen my tongue to declare, for the benefit of others, the exceeding greatness of the salvation of the Gospel, or that he might bestow upon me a real good, and that it might come in the shape of severer trials. I could not choose, though the promise was, "If ye ask anything in my name, I will do it." "Such a gift as thou wilt," I replied. "He that asketh

receiveth," was the answer. There was no effort on my part to lay hold on the promises of God. I knew that the faith which receives is the faith of the Son of God, that abides in the hearts of the humble; and as with listening ear I gave attention to the inward voice, I was made to know that God had put into my possession a store of blessings, not for my sake only, but for the sake of the church and the world, to be brought into requisition in his own time and way. The Lord gave me liberty in declaring the things which he then showed me. As the work gradually advanced in me, I realized, more and more, that God, in his dealings with me, had as great a regard to the highest good of others as he had to my own, and that the gifts which I received were for others equally as for myself, while I felt that God was making me the depository of spiritual treasures, which I longed to distribute.

This longing which I had to impart to others, while my soul seemed as a sealed fountain, led me often to say, in class-meetings, that I felt that I had a baptism to be

baptized with, and was straitened until it was accomplished. Though I did not cease to declare my full dedication to the service of the Lord, as well as my unwavering confidence in him, I had no liberty in testifying to others of the extent to which he had saved me. I had only to wait until my spiritual Moses should smite the rock in my heart, and bid the waters gush forth.

About two years since, I received the assurance that this scripture was beginning to be fulfilled in me, "Whoso believeth on me, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water." This passage had been brought to my mind with a great deal of force, years before, when I first began to feel myself bound as a whole burnt-offering upon the altar. While I saw the broadness of the promise, and especially while I looked at the power to do good to others that was embraced in it, Satan seemed ready to make use of it to urge me to claim its immediate fulfilment in me, rather than to submit that God should choose for me as to the manner of the Spirit's operations in my heart. I was made to understand, at that time, that I

had no prerogatives as a daughter of Abraham, to give any direction to God's work. I had to learn that this scripture is not fulfilled in its highest sense until the soul is risen with Christ, and with him exalted. It is in that grave which the soul finds that is buried with Christ that these living waters take their source.

I received, in the assurance of the fulfilment of this promise, a manifest token that Christ was risen in me. There was also accompanied with it a realization of that fulness of glory which is enjoyed by the soul when it comes to be completely restored to the divine image. My tongue was loosened, and before the assembled multitude I shouted, "*Rivers! rivers! rivers of living water!*" From that time I saw clearly that I should overcome, by the word of my testimony, and that I should know the full import of that song that ascribes glory, honor, and dominion, unto Him that has washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God.

CHAPTER VIII.

Came to a complete triumph. — Was enabled to give an explicit testimony to the hidden workings of the Spirit. — Overshadowed with the exceeding glory of the presence of the Lord. — Spiritual communings. — A clear indication of a call from God. — Left home. — Seemed in more than Eden's garden. — The joy of the soul restored from the bondage of sin to the image of God, greater than Adam's in his primeval state. — Arrived at S. — Fulfilled the mission given. — Conscious of being made a sign to others.

NEARLY a year since, my soul was brought to a complete triumph. I overcame by the word of my testimony. At a camp-meeting held in Portville, I was enabled to testify that I had known Christ in the fellowship of his sufferings, and that I was beginning to know him in the power of his resurrection.

I was especially called to testify of former exercises, in which I had seen, as through a glass darkly, what then I had come to realize fully. I was led to go to the Rushford tent, where I could testify to friends with

whom I was daily conversant concerning the way in which God had led me. As we repaired from the tent to the stand, I was rejoiced to hear the preacher announce for his text the following words: "And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations (and he shall rule them with a rod of iron, as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers); even as I received of my Father. And I will give him the morning star."

As the preacher, in his exposition of the text, gave a description of the works of Christ which we are to keep unto the end, and spoke of the victory obtained by them that overcome, I saw that the way was being prepared for my giving a more specific testimony than I had ever before done in public. As the preacher concluded his discourse, I arose to testify to the truth of the doctrine preached. As the Spirit gave me utterance, I there stated that I had overcome; that I had kept Christ's works unto the end; that I had drunk of his cup, and been baptized with his baptism. As the

fountains of my soul were unsealed, I said, "I have trodden the wine-press alone; in my humiliation my judgment has been taken away. I have been led like a lamb to the slaughter; and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so I have opened not my mouth."

Before leaving the encampment, such an exceeding weight of glory rested upon me as could not but be made manifest. I felt that the occasion had been one on which my spiritual nuptials had been celebrated. Satisfied that all who would arrive at the full glory of the Gospel dispensation must come in the same way, — even by the cross of Christ, — made known by inward crucifixions, under the influences of that Spirit which permeated my entire being, as it was my privilege to be among the servants of the Lord as one that serves, I administered to them the words of truth, by saying to them, individually, "Poverty, then riches; suffering, then glory; humility, then honor." I was conscious, at that time, that to be able to speak the truth *appropriately* is no

less a miracle than that of converting water to wine.

Returning home, I spent the night in spiritual communings. The way which I was to take having been clearly indicated, I arose at early dawn and commenced making the needful preparations for the journey laid before me. I saw that I was to go to Smithport, where I expected to meet my husband, and attend a Sabbath-school celebration, and fulfil my mission to the little ones who should be there assembled.

Knowing from whom I had received my commission, what to others appeared formidable obstacles were no more to me than the billowy deep was to Christ, as it rolled between him on the shore and the disciples in the ship, tossed on the Sea of Galilee.

With the whisper of peace in my heart, not less authoritative than that by which he commanded the winds and the waves, I was enabled to calm the tumult which arose among my little ones, as they manifested the distress which they felt at the thought of my leaving them again so soon.

To a brother who kindly said, "Do not

go, Sister Thomas; I am afraid you will make yourself sick," my reply was, "The King's commandment is exceeding urgent. The day of the Lord hastens; it hastens greatly."

My way having been prepared, in a manner which strikingly exhibited the fulfilment of the injunction, "Provide neither gold, nor purse, nor scrip," I left my home, shielded with the benediction of the Son of Peace. The senses of the inner man were so fully awake that my physical powers were comparatively dormant, yet sympathizing in the joy of my soul, they knew no want. Though, compared with the perfection of the inward vision, the outward was indeed dim, yet my physical, mental, and moral powers, seemed in perfect harmony with each other, — with the visible creation, and with that God that pervades universal nature and fills immensity.

Did I open my eyes to look upon the surrounding scenery, I saw nothing but grandeur and beauty, in joyous harmony. The trees of the fields clapped their hands; the mountains skipped like rams, and the little

hills like lambs. All inanimate nature seemed to dance for joy, while it perfectly answered the design of its Creator.

Assured that my soul was fully restored to the divine image, by the mighty workings of that power by which Christ was raised from the dead, I seemed in more than Eden's garden, while, with a consciousness of true Christian liberty, I felt as free to obey the impulses of my restored soul, as the roe upon the mountain is free to obey its own natural instincts.

I was satisfied that Adam the first, created as he was in the image of God, and empowered with dominion over the beasts of the field, the fowls of the air, and the fish of the sea, was a stranger to that dignity of which the soul is conscious, as, risen in Gethsemane's garden, it becomes both a king and priest unto God. I felt called to testify that the soul which fully awakes in the likeness of God is abundantly satisfied, — that its real joy is greater than was Adam's, at his first creation. His was indeed a perfect happiness. As, conscious of innocence, he walked forth in that

beautiful garden in which he was placed, pleased with its odors, fanned with its breezes, and charmed with the melody of its music, his was a joyous state, which might well provoke the envy of a fallen angel. Doubtless his whole being responded to the acclamation, "Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord!" But the restored soul, having washed its robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb, as it takes its new position before the throne, has as great an assurance of its innocence, while it sings a louder song. Here the Christian sings a *triumphant* song. Here are shouts of triumph like the shouts of warriors returned from the field of conquest. Here is no more contending with flesh and blood. Here is no more death, neither sorrow nor crying; for the former things are passed away. Here the chorus of the Christian's song is, "Unto Him that hath loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God, to Him be glory, and honor, and dominion forever."

On my way to Smithport, I spent the

night, as I had the one previous, in spiritual communings. If sleep departed from my eyes, my body did not fail to become invigorated, from the manifest tokens which my soul received of the speedy triumph of Zion. I heard a voice saying, with no uncertainty of meaning, "I will bruise Satan under thy feet shortly."

The succeeding day, I arrived in Smithport, and spent the following night under a most joyous sense of the presence of my Beloved. I felt that his left hand was under my head, and that his right hand embraced me.

The next day, as, with a joyous heart, I repaired to the place where were assembled the little ones who celebrated, simultaneously, their nation's independence and their Sabbath-school anniversary, I was impressed with the fitness of the occasion for delivering to them the message of truth which was in my heart. The house, beautifully adorned with flowers and evergreens, was, to me, strikingly emblematical of the beauty of Zion. Two banners were placed in a conspicuous place, on which were inscribed two

mottoes: one, "Enemies in war, — in peace, friends;" the other, "Knowledge is power," very fitly suggested the truths which I wished to communicate.

Satisfied that he who moves in the divine order is never out of place, I took the time allotted me, as the children were partaking of their refreshments, to communicate to them the truth, as the Spirit gave me utterance. As I was leaving them, conscious that I was among them as one whom they knew not, I could but drop a word to the older members of the congregation, and say, "This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears: 'I was found of them that asked not for me.'"

I felt a conviction, which I could not but express, that it is true of those that are in perfect harmony with God, that whatsoever they shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever they shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

During my stay in Smithport, I not only experienced powerful manifestations, but I was also the subject of exercises, the remembrance of which now only serves to

strengthen the conviction which I then had, that God was making me a sign unto those that witnessed them. Previous to this time, as I realized that my soul was coming to enjoy the consummation of her union with her Beloved, I had seen that God designed in his own way to make manifest his work in my heart by visible signs. He did, in that marked period of spiritual manifestation to which reference has so often been made, plainly indicate to me that he would make me a sign unto this generation.

As I began to see that what had been shadowed forth before my spiritual vision was to be realized by me as a matter of *personal experience*, it was often with me a question why I should have been called to cry to *others*, "Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight." As the valleys have been exalted, the mountains brought low, the crooked been made straight, and the rough places smooth, in my own heart, the mystery is explained. God has accomplished his work in me, not for my sake only, but for the sake of others. He has done it in such a way as not only to

make me a sign to others, but to compel me to bear witness of myself.

If the narration of my religious experience, as well as my minute description of the manner in which God has led me, as one blind, in a way I knew not, shall induce the reader to place implicit confidence in God, and submit to the mighty baptisms of the Spirit, my highest wish will be gratified with reference to him; and he may be assured that, if he abide the day of his coming (for he is like a refiner's fire, and as a fuller's soap), he will, becoming seven times purified, rejoice, ultimately, in his full restoration to the divine image.

“CAN YE DRINK OF THE CUP THAT I
DRINK OF?”

Full long I sought, with ceaseless care,
At Christ's right hand a seat,
Ere yet I breathed that humble prayer,
That asks no higher throne to share
Than one at Jesus' feet.

Full long he watched that raging thirst,
That sought for thrones and crowns ;

Yet, as he loved me at the first,
And died for sinners, e'en the worst,
He spake without a frown :

“ Ye know not what ye ask, nor think
E'en what my glories are ;
I have a cup, of which I drink, —
If from this cup you will not shrink,
You shall my kingdom share.”

I said, “ *What thou wilt give*, I choose,
For grace can make me bear ;
My life for thee I 'll gladly lose,
Nor will I e'er thy cup refuse,
Since I with thee may share.”

I bent me low, nor did I dare
To seize the cup in haste ;
“ Thy will be done,” my only prayer ;
To drink each draught my only care,
Though bitter to the taste.

I drank ! Ah me ! what bitterness !
To God I raised the cry :
“ If to my lips thou still must press
This *wormwood* cup, thy hand I 'll bless ;
'T is good with Christ to die.”

That cup is passed : a fragrance sweet
Now fills my chastened soul ;
Risen with Christ, for glory meet,
Joint heir with him, I take my seat,
The nations to control.

CHAPTER IX.

Too much importance not to be attached to the manner of the Spirit's operations. — The varied condition of the soul at different stages of experience. — The soul that is in union with Christ in union with his purposes to others.

WITHOUT further reference to personal experience, it may be well to remark, that no particular importance should be attached to marked religious exercises, or special spiritual manifestations, considered as the only way or means of inward sanctification.

The Saviour, in praying for his disciples, says, "Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth." It is by the apprehension and reception of the truth that the restoration of the soul is accomplished. God makes choice of that channel of communication which best pleases himself. He is not confined to any set of means. He may enlighten our understandings by the perusal of the Scriptures, so that we may clearly see in them the way in which we are to walk. But if, in reading the Word

of God, the veil be so on our hearts that we do not readily perceive the truths therein contained, he, who is the same yesterday, to-day, and forever, can, by his Holy Spirit, reveal the truth in us in a thousand ways. He may at once shine in our hearts with exceeding brightness, giving us a most vivid apprehension of spiritual things, or he may cause us to see at first as through a glass darkly, by showing us the shadow, and then the substance. Whether we be permitted to see the path in which we are led, or whether we go out blindfolded, not knowing whither, is of little consequence to us, while the command, "Follow thou me," must be implicitly obeyed. It is true that he who in everything gives thanks will not fail to recognize the hand of God in the special manner of the Spirit's operations in his own case; but this must ever sink into comparative insignificance, in view of the glorious result, — the production of perfect love. Satisfied that though there be *diversities* of operations, it is the same Spirit which worketh all in all, he will be far from saying to others, with reference to this or that

peculiar manner, "*This is the way, walk ye therein.*" While he may not fail to declare that in whatever heart the Gospel fully accomplishes its designs, the old Adam must die, and the new Man be raised up, he may not tell of the *manner* of the death or the resurrection. Like the apostle, while he rightly appreciates the various gifts and offices, as well as the diversities of the operations of the Spirit, he is ready to say, "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing."

It may be a matter of serious inquiry with some, as to what especially characterizes that stage of experience which follows that *entire crucifixion of self*, a testimony to which has been given in the preceding

pages. It may be asked, In what respect does the state of the soul differ here from the condition which it occupied when it laid itself upon the altar of entire consecration, and was conscious of acceptance? The work of entire consecration is a work perfect in its kind, and fully meets the divine requirement when wrought in faith. As the children of Israel, at the command of Moses, brought, with willing hearts, their offerings to him, in order to the erection of the tabernacle, so the soul here offers up its entire powers to the divine disposal. The position now gained is a very important one, and so long as it is maintained, holiness to the Lord is inscribed upon every capability of the soul. There is an important sense in which it may be said that the kingdom of God has come to such a soul. Still, it is the kingdom in its incipency, rather than in its completeness. Here faith may be perfect, inasmuch as it may claim, with full expectation, that God shall accomplish all his pleasure; and the Christian may say here, with a holy confidence, "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect?"

It is God that justifies; who is he that condemns?" But as he submits to the baptism of the Holy Ghost and of fire, he becomes the subject of a progressive work, similar to that of the building of the tabernacle. He has no new offering to make, for he feels that the covenant which God has made with him is an everlasting one. He has laid himself on the altar of consecration, saying, with the poet,

“Take my soul and body’s powers ;
Take my memory, mind, and will ;
All my goods and all my hours ;
All I know, and all I feel ;
All I think, or speak, or do ; —
Take my heart, but make it new.”

In realizing the answer of this prayer, he finds that each separate faculty is undergoing a state of purification and preparation; and as he comes fully to awake in the divine image, he sees that all things have indeed become new, — that his appetites and propensities, as well as every capability of the soul, have not only undergone an entire renovation, but have come into a harmony of position, and that his spiritual state

is one of permanency, answering to the tabernacle in its completeness. To such an one, the kingdom of God has come with power and great glory. He realizes that whereas, in his fallen state, sin abounded, now, being perfectly restored to God's image, grace much more abounds. He realizes the fulfilment of that ancient promise, "I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts; and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people." What matter of surprise is it, if, from the mouths of such as have attained to this state, — this resurrection from spiritual death, — there should proceed a great voice, not unlike that which John heard, saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away"? Do not these who have come to this place of spiritual

triumph answer to the description of those concerning whom one of the elders said, "What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they?" — of whom it was said, "These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple; and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of water; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."

But the inquiry may be urged, May not danger arise from that state of conscious security which the soul experiences? Doubtless many a follower of Christ has been overcome by the same temptation which the Master experienced when the devil said to him, "If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down, for it is written, He shall give

his angels charge concerning thee, and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone."

Still, the fall of such has not been the result of a firm reliance on that merciful High Priest, who, having himself been tempted, knows how to succor them that are tempted; but, on the contrary, it has been the fruit of a *presumptuous confidence*, a place for which is nowhere found in that heart where *all things are made new*. It seems impossible to contemplate that state of grace in which all the mind of Christ, in its maturity, is brought into the soul, without being impressed that from its nature it must be one of permanency. The poet seems to have that view of it, when he sung :

"Jesus, plant and root in me
All the mind that was in thee ;
Settled peace I then shall find :
Jesus is a quiet mind.

"Anger I no more shall feel, —
Always even, always still ;
Meekly on my God reclined ;
Jesus is a gentle mind.

“I shall suffer and fulfil
All my Father’s gracious will,
Be in all alike resigned ;
Jesus is a patient mind.

“When ’tis deeply rooted here,
Perfect love shall cast out fear ;
Fear doth servile spirits bind ;
Jesus is a noble mind.

“I shall nothing know beside
Jesus, and him crucified ;
Perfectly to him be joined ;
Jesus is a thankful mind.

“I shall triumph evermore ;
Gratefully my God adore, —
God, so good, so true, so kind ;
Jesus is a thankful mind.

“Lowly, loving, meek, and pure,
I shall to the end endure, —
Be no more to sin inclined ;
Jesus is a constant mind.

“I shall fully be restored
To the image of my Lord ;
Witnessing to all mankind,
Jesus is a perfect mind.”

In the minds of some, who are not yet satisfied as to the practicability of attaining to this state of grace in the present life,

another inquiry may arise, — to wit, Is not this supposed state of grace the fruitful source of antinomianism? Doubtless great errors have originated from the fact, that many have misapprehended their spiritual condition, by thinking too highly of their own attainments; but truth is nowhere held responsible for the consequences of error.

If Satan, in view of the progress and final triumph of truth, has used his utmost endeavors to counterfeit the genuine work of the Spirit, in its highest forms of manifestation, — if he has succeeded but too well, — shall his lying wonders make the truth of God without effect? Is it not because that he is aware that nothing can more effectually contribute to the weakening of his power than the attainment of this state of grace on the part of believers, that he is manifestly working, at the present day, with all manner of deceivableness?

Taking it for granted that this state is not a supposition, but a reality, may we not expect, from such as have attained unto it, works correspondent to faith? May we not expect that Christ's will that his dis-

ciples should bear much fruit shall be accomplished in these? True it is, that, according to the judgment of this world, they may be far from accomplishing their mission. They who are looking for results correspondent to the visible array of means may well say, What will these quietists accomplish? It is not saying too much of these to say, that they will do the bidding of their spiritual Joshua. These are the called, and chosen, and faithful, who follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. They will not, in the day of battle, desert the Captain of their salvation, — him who is called Faithful and True, and of whom it is said, "In righteousness he doth judge and make war." They who are not looking that it shall be made manifest that the excellency of the power is of God, and not of man, may see little to hope or to fear from the noiseless tread of these kings and priests, as they march about the walls of spiritual Jericho; but when, at God's bidding, they shall shout with a great shout, the walls of their enemies shall fall, and he whose battle it is shall have the praise.

We do well to remember that the Lord, in accomplishing his mighty purposes of grace in the earth, will leave no flesh to glory in his presence. That in bringing again Zion, and in making her a praise in the whole earth, he will bring together the separate parts of the spiritual temple without the sound of a hammer.

Says the Psalmist, "Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined." It is only when the Gospel has so far accomplished its designs that it has brought the soul to a full restoration to the Divine Image, that the Christian possesses in himself that perfection of beauty which is here ascribed to Zion, and is emphatically prepared to be the light of the world. Every separate power and faculty of which he is possessed is fully prepared to become the channel of communication of spiritual good to others. Here is beauty in perfection, both intrinsic and relative. Here are order and adaptation combined in perfect harmony, not only rendering the soul admirable in itself, considered as the finished workmanship of Him who has created it anew in

Christ Jesus, but admirably fitted for the work for which it is designed. It is especially true of the Christian here, that the words of Christ are fulfilled: "He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do, because I go to my Father." Having no more contention with flesh and blood, the war in his members being over, he is fully prepared, in harmony with his Divine Leader, to attack the powers of darkness and spiritual wickedness in high places. Though, being awake in Christ's likeness, he is satisfied with reference to himself, coming into his new position, being made king and priest unto God, he sympathizes fully with his ascended Lord, and is, with him, henceforth expecting, until his enemies become his footstool. Though his state be one of quietness, peace, and assurance, — though no sweat of toil is on his brow; and he reposes with infinite delight on the arm of his Beloved, — he is, from his very nature, the servant of all, and fulfils the injunction, "Whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister." In

his intercourse with his fellow-men, he shows that, like his Master, his heart is made of tenderness; that he comes not to them to be ministered unto, but to minister; that he seeks not theirs, but them. Though conscious that dominion is given to him, even power over the nations, he knows no authority but that of love; and, as God's messenger to a fallen world, he comes with a salutation of peace. Though believing that he whom the Son makes free is free indeed, he will not abuse his liberty by destroying with his meat him for whom Christ died. Gentle as a nurse with a child, he will not break the bruised reed, or quench the smoking flax. It is a law of his nature, to the weak to become as weak, that he may gain the weak, — yea, to please all men, for their good unto edification. His sympathies, far from being confined to such as have come, in the unity of the faith, to the measure of the stature of perfect men in Christ, necessarily extend to the weakest believers that hang upon his promises. He cannot regard these as separate from himself; and with the same facility that the

body bears about a feeble member, he bears their burdens, exemplifying the truth of the words of the apostle, "Ye are members one of another," by rejoicing with them that rejoice, weeping with them that weep, and enduring all things for the sake of the elect. His heart of love going out in the same direction of that of the Infinite, he weeps over sinners, even the rebellious; and, girded by the might of Him to whom all power is given, in heaven and in earth, he can descend to the very depths of degradation, to snatch the prey from the teeth of the spoiler, and thus save a soul from death.

As charity vaunteth not itself, and doth not behave itself unseemly, he both realizes and exemplifies that he has nothing that he has not received. Called to be a witness for Christ, though he speak the truth with all boldness, he will do it with all humility. Does he declare that he that is born of God doth not commit sin, for his seed remaineth in him, and he cannot sin because he is born of God, — that he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one touch-

eth him not, — he does it in a way to make it manifest that all the glory is due to the *seed of the woman*, whose prerogative it is to bruise the serpent's head, and destroy his works.

While, by a spiritual vision, he is made, in a greater or less degree, to discern the signs of the times, and can but be pained with the disorder and confusion which sin has produced, he cannot with a rash hand bring himself to the work of pulling down that which he sees must ultimately be abolished, or even of building up that which he is satisfied will at length become established. Relying on that God who is fully competent to bring order out of confusion, and light out of darkness, he readily adapts himself to the present condition of things, neither running before he is sent, or moving hesitatingly when commanded.

In fine, the exact representative of Him who was made flesh, and dwelt among men, whether confined to the private or public walks of life, though, like a royal personage in disguise, comparatively unknown, he is still the salt of the earth, and

the light of the world. As the Gospel shall perform its mission in exalting our poor fallen race to its proper condition, it shall be his blessed privilege (inasmuch as the works that he shall do shall be greater than those accomplished by Jesus of Nazareth) to open the eyes of the spiritually blind, to cause the spiritually deaf to hear, and, by the words of truth which he shall speak, restore to life such as are dead in trespasses and sins.

CHAPTER X.

Safety in submission to the teachings of the Spirit. — The Scriptures point to the Comforter, and its teachings lead to an inward kingdom. — Causes of ignorance in spiritual things. — Spiritual wickedness the great barrier in the way of the advancement of the church. — A day of triumph at hand.

As I desire to bear testimony to the necessity of *confidence in*, and *submission to*, the teachings of the Spirit, I would not fail to make the impression, that the soul that possesses this confidence and this submission is in a safe position.

I am aware that not a few, who honestly desire to know the things of God, are still in doubt as to the practicability of following this inward Teacher. They fear lest, in doing so, they shall be left to follow their own imaginations. In the thick darkness which surrounds them, instead of feeling after God, by obeying the glimmering ray which shines in their hearts as in a dark

place, they turn their eyes to outward duties, and vainly hope that by the observance of these they shall burst their chains.

How little do these perceive that they are actually realizing the thing which they most desire to shun; that they are, in fact, following their own vain imagination, so long as they neglect to follow the "true Light that lights every man that comes into the world!"

While there is no doubt that Satan often counterfeits the work and the graces of the Spirit, what higher proof than this can we ask, of the importance of the genuine work?

Is it not strange that to the natural man, who cannot discern the things of the Spirit, it may seem like being placed in a very uncertain position, to be shut up to following an unseen hand? but he in whose heart God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son, crying Abba Father, as readily obeys the hidden impulses of the spiritual life as does the lamb the voice of its mother, or the sheep the voice of the shepherd. Says Christ, "My sheep hear my voice and they

follow me, and a stranger they will not follow."

Many seem to suppose, because they have in their hands the Scriptures written by the inspiration of God, that they do not need the constant and unerring teachings of the inward Comforter, although there is not a truth contained in them which is more prominent than that the Spirit has been given to guide us in all things.

A large class of Bible readers at the present are not unlike many who gladly received John as a prophet, but rejected Christ, of whom he bore witness. They do not come to that Christ who reigns in the heart, whose prerogative it is to baptize with the Holy Ghost and with fire.

The Bible points those who follow its teachings to that kingdom which is within, which is not meat and drink, but righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. Until the reader of the Scriptures finds this inward kingdom, the beauty and glory of the truths contained in them are unrevealed, and even then their mysteries may not be all explained. The meek who fol-

low God in perfect self-abandonment do not complain, if He, whose sole prerogative it is to open to them the Scriptures, does not reveal to them all the mysteries contained in them. Knowing that Jesus Christ is of God made unto them wisdom, they quietly wait on him, leaving it with him to make disclosures as he pleases.

Since it is a fact that many even of professing Christians, who have great reverence for the Bible, do nevertheless never come to know the nature of that kingdom which Christ came to establish, is it not worth our while to inquire the cause? Perhaps some may feel that the question is fully answered in that oft repeated reply, "because of unbelief." But are there not obvious causes which induce this unbelief, which are lost sight of? Are the offices of the Spirit sufficiently set forth by those that professedly stand up for the declaration and defence of the truth? Is it not on account of the lack of instruction in this particular, that many are sickly among us?

A pious writer of the present day well exclaims, O how infinite in importance is the

point which the arch deceiver gains by the little words "only unbelief"! But does not Satan equally endeavor to blind the mind in another respect? As he would fain persuade the sinner that unbelief is a misfortune rather than a sin, does he not equally hinder him by inducing him to look without for that which can only be found within? Are not many sincere inquirers hindered by looking to a Christ that has gone away, rather than expecting an inward revelation of him in their hearts?

Mr. Fletcher gives as a reason why Christians reject Christ in the Spirit, as the Jews rejected him in the flesh, that they expect him in their own way. He says, "Cease from your own false wisdom, and become as a little child, or you cannot enter the kingdom of heaven and see the King in his beauty."

It cannot have escaped the eye of the spiritual observer at the present day, that false wisdom is still not only preventing the possessors of it from entering into the kingdom of heaven themselves, but by being

exalted to places of authority it is hindering others.

Spiritual wickedness in high places has so exalted itself, that the testimony of Christ's little ones, who do indeed follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth, is scarcely heard.

True, they are indeed the light of the world and the salt of the earth; but their number is so small compared with the mass of professing Christians, that they are scarcely recognized as bearing about them continually the distinguishing badge of discipleship,—that of love one to another. They do indeed love one another with pure hearts, fervently, but, comparatively speaking, the world perceives it not.

Since the Saviour has said, "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another," shall we be out of place, if we inquire why it is that the world feels so little the power of this love? Where is to be found the great barrier that intervenes between the church, Christ's representative on earth, and the world, which is to be saved through her

instrumentality? Shall we not find this barrier in the nominal churches in Christendom? What though in these God hath reserved to himself more than seven thousand men that have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal, who that is possessed of spiritual discernment can deny that the language of inspiration addressed to the church at Laodicea is appropriately addressed to these? Who that is able by a spiritual vision to discern the signs of the times cannot see that human wisdom, which thinks by searching to find out God, and prefers its own vain efforts to that humility which submits to the teachings of the Spirit, is both a Herod and a Pilate to Christ's little ones who follow him, in true simplicity of spirit?

Here it seeks the young child, to destroy him, and forces him into Egypt. There it arrays him in mock robes, spits upon and condemns him. Nor is its malice abated, though it nail him to the cross; but it must needs place a guard about the dead body of Christ spiritually, crucified in his members. But there comes a day of triumph for Zion.

As certainly as Christ rent asunder the bands of death, because it was not possible that he should be holden of them, so certainly the church, following her triumphant Head, shall see a day of conquest. All the barriers which spiritual wickedness can ever throw around the church shall be no more to her, as she comes to be risen with her Head, and permeated with the power of his resurrection, than the keepers were to Christ, while they watched about his sepulchre. As He arose, so shall she; and as her members shall be able to testify to a risen Saviour in the heart, the world shall feel the authority of their whisper of peace.

Then shall be made manifest in the church that love wherewith the Father has loved the Son. The world, in seeing how Christians love, shall see the outshinings of the glory of that God that is in the midst of them. Then will be manifested love for betrayers and murderers. The carnal Christian shall be pricked in the heart, while he shall look upon Him whom he has pierced, though ignorantly, in unbelief, and consent

himself to die with Jesus crucified. The elder brother, overcome by the power of love, shall join in the music and dancing which shall celebrate the prodigal's return. The word of the Lord shall have free course, run, and be glorified, and Zion shall no more be termed desolate, but she shall become the joy of the whole earth.

CHAPTER XI.

A word to Christ's little ones who have chosen him in poverty of spirit. — Zion already in beautiful garments.

PERHAPS, by this time, the patience of the reader is becoming exhausted; yet I cannot do justice to my own feelings, without saying a word to Christ's little ones, who have chosen him in utter poverty of spirit.

I need not tell you that, having Christ, you have with him all needed good; for I know that in this respect your heart is as my heart. I need not say to you as Madame Guyon's adviser said to her, "Accustom yourself to seek God in your heart, and there you will find him;" for it is given to you to know that the kingdom of heaven is within you. Ye have an unction from the Holy One, and need not that any man teach you. I need not tell you that it is safe to trust implicitly to the teachings of the indwelling Comforter, for I am satisfied that to him you pay ceaseless

homage, worshipping the Father in spirit and in truth. I need not tell you of the harmony which pervades that kingdom of which you are the subjects. I need not say to you that here

“Names, and sects, and parties fall,
And Jesus Christ is all in all ;”

that there is no contending among the members of the body of Christ, no saying of the hand to the foot, “I have no need of thee.” I need not say to you that the subjects of this kingdom are members one of another, and that they would as soon hate their own flesh, as fail of fulfilling that “new commandment” which said, Christ “give I unto you, that ye love one another.”

I would, if I might, wash the feet of the humblest disciple, who in following Christ in the regeneration, is treading the wine-press alone. Permit me, then, to say, whether before Pilate or Herod, or bearing the cross up the rugged steeps of Calvary, Fear none of those things that shall come upon thee ; though thou fall, thou shalt rise again. The sufferings of the present time are not worthy

to be compared to the glory which thou shalt realize, when thou shalt have kept Christ's work unto the end. Thou shalt be more than conqueror. Covered with wounds, evincing even in thy fall that thou hast been a mighty warrior, hereafter thy scars shall be the tokens of thy victory, whilst thou shalt bear about thee the marks of the dying of the Lord Jesus. Thou shalt make thy grave with the rich, in thy death. In that new life which thou shalt fully assume, thou shalt continually bear about thee the odor of that ointment with which thy dead body was perfumed. Risen with thy risen Head, thou shalt no more remember the pain of that anguish which thy soul now realizes, as in being baptized into Christ it is baptized into his death. If thy delight in a crucified Saviour be such that thou canst under no circumstances forsake him, what joys shall swell thy heart, when he shall bring thee forth from thy grave and deck thee with jewels, — yea, adorn thee as a bride adorned for her husband. As Jehovah said unto Abraham, "Now know I that thou fearest God, since thou hast not with-

held from me thy Son, thine only Son, whom thou lovest," so will thy heavenly Spouse say to thee, now know I that thou lovest me, since thou hast loved me unto death; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.

Standing as in the garden of Gethsemane, risen with my risen Head, I would breathe a whisper of peace to every member of the body of Christ. Ye Marys, and ye Johns, who with weeping sympathy have stood about the cross of Jesus, crucified in his members, seek not the living among the dead. Behold he is risen. Run with joy to bring his disciples word. Publish the joyful message. Zion has already put on her beautiful garments, and is terrible to all opposition, as an army with banners. Like her Lord in Majesty, her eyes are as a flame of fire, and her feet like unto fine brass. Out of her mouth proceedeth a two-edged sword which devoureth her enemies. Her countenance is as the sun shining in his strength.

Ye Peters, who still are weeping bitterly at the remembrance of that cowardice which led you to follow at a distance the man of

the cross, more than restored to former confidence, strengthen your brethren. Feed the sheep and the lambs.

To every doubting Thomas, let me say : Handle me and see. Reach hither thy finger and behold my hands, and reach hither thy hand and thrust it into my side, and be not faithless, but believing.

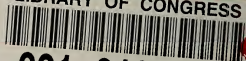
Perhaps I cannot better take leave of the reader, than by saying, in the language of Mr. Fletcher, "If you ever seek the saving knowledge of Jesus, never stop till you can witness your sun go down no more ; but, in the mean time, never slight the least ray of the heavenly light. The least may open into the broad day of eternity."





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